

# MIND MATTERS

## DISPUTATIO

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VOLUME 21

MIND MATTERS  
Studies of Medieval  
and Early Modern Intellectual History  
in Honour of Marcia Colish

Edited by

Cary J. Nederman, Nancy Van Deusen,  
and E. Ann Matter



BREPOLS

## **British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

Mind matters : studies of medieval and early-modern  
intellectual history in honour of Marcia Colish. --  
(Disputatio ; v. 21)

1. Colish, Marcia L. 2. Learning and scholarship--  
History--Medieval, 500-1500. 3. Philosophy, Medieval.  
4. Theology--History--Middle Ages, 600-1500. 5. Europe--  
Intellectual life.

I. Series II. Nederman, Cary J. III. Van Deusen, Nancy E.

IV. Matter, E. Ann.

001'094'0902-dc22

ISBN-13: 9782503527567

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D/2009/0095/71

ISBN: 978- 2-503-52756-7

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**T**he opportunity to honour one of the foremost intellectual historians and medievalists of the last fifty years is both a gratifying and a humbling one. Marcia Colish has built a significant circle of students, colleagues, and friends over the course of her eminent career and this volume is but a small tribute to her accomplishments. We hope that our celebration of her scholarship proves a worthy recognition of the many contributions that she has made to the academy generally and of the many kindnesses she has shown to the intellectual life and growth of each of the scholars whose work is represented here. It is a testament to the extent of Marcia's impact that we were unable to include chapters by all of the individuals who wished to be included in the pages of this volume.

The editors wish to thank Georgiana Donavin and Richard Utz of the *Disputatio* series and Simon Forde of *Brepols* for their support of this project and for their patience. In addition, credit must be given to Mary Elizabeth Sullivan of Texas A&M University and Luke Blair of the University of Pennsylvania, who provided invaluable editorial support.

*Cary J. Nederman*  
*Nancy Van Deusen*  
*E. Ann Matter*

March 2008



## ABBREVIATIONS

CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966– )
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953– )
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum (Vienna: Tempsky, 1866– )
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Hannover: Hahn, 1826– )
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus [...] Series Graeca</i> , ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols (Paris: Migne, 1857–66)
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus [...] Series Latina</i> , ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Migne, 1844–64)



## INTRODUCTION: MARCIA COLISH AND MIND MATTERS

E. Ann Matter, Nancy Van Deusen,  
and Cary J. Nederman

Few scholars of the twentieth-century age of academic specialization can boast the broad interdisciplinary intellectual vision of Marcia Colish. Even in her Yale dissertation, published in 1968 as *The Mirror of Language*, Colish ranged from the fifth to the fourteenth century, through late antique Neoplatonism, monastic learning, scholastic Aristotelianism, and Renaissance humanism.<sup>1</sup> Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Dante, the protagonists of this book, have been her ongoing interlocutors over a career of forty years, in a series of discussions delving into issues of epistemology, theology, cultural history, literary aesthetics, and politics. Throughout her career, Colish has shown an ability to function at a bird's eye level of Western intellectual history, over the sweep of a millennium. In this respect, perhaps the perfect bookend to this first book, published as she began her teaching career at Oberlin College, is *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400*.<sup>2</sup> The focus here is on the continuity and disjunction of intellectual life as it developed in the Western Middle Ages, bringing together threads from philosophy, literature, and politics.

<sup>1</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); 2nd rev. edn (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

<sup>2</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400*, The Yale Intellectual History of the West (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); second printing, 1998; paperback edition, 1999. Published in Italian as *La cultura del medioevo (400–1400)*, trans. by Elisabetta Gallo, Le vie della civiltà (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2001).

But Colish is by no means only a generalist. Indeed, she is known for her technical expertise in several different areas of medieval intellectual history. When already a tenured professor, she began the study of Greek in order to enable her pursuit of one philosophical tradition from the ancient world that cast a long shadow on medieval Christianity; this led to a two-volume study of the Stoic tradition.<sup>3</sup> Altogether, this work is nine hundred pages of meticulous enquiry into the influence of Stoicism on the world that shaped early Latin Christianity and the critical centuries of the formation of Western Christian intellectual life. Although it was well known that the Stoics had a great influence on the development of Christian theology, especially in the West, where the influence of Cicero, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius was unavoidable, no one had ever told the story with this much detail, nor with the intention of linking the authors of the classical age to their Christian counterparts in the early Middle Ages.

Intellectual links have always been a source of fascination for Colish. Her other great two-volume work, *Peter Lombard*, was published by Brill in 1994.<sup>4</sup> This is the result of many years of pondering the intellectual links between the monastic schools of the early twelfth century (the world of Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter Abelard) and the towering figures of thirteenth-century scholasticism, such as Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas. Her insight here is that the story of the first generation of true scholastics, perhaps best represented by the synthesizing encyclopedist, Peter Lombard, had never been fully told. This is mostly because the Lombard's generation was lost in the shadows of the great mendicants who dominated this world in the thirteenth century, but Colish shows to what extent the famous scholastic synthesis is based on the presuppositions, especially the methodological innovations, of the earlier Parisian masters, most of all Peter Lombard.

The recognition that Colish has earned as an interpreter of this world of early scholasticism has recently been demonstrated by the appearance of her own Variorum collection of previously published essays, entitled *Studies in Scholasticism*.<sup>5</sup> This volume collects six essays originally printed between 1986 and 2004 in a

<sup>3</sup> Marcia Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Heiko A. Oberman, *Studies in the History of Christian Thought*, 35, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1985); paperback reimpression with addenda and corrigenda (Leiden: Brill, 1990).

<sup>4</sup> Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, ed. by A. J. Vanderjagt, Brill's *Studies in Intellectual History*, 41, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Studies in Scholasticism*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

number of esteemed journals and conference proceedings. Two of these give an overview of two issues in scholastic theology (or any theology, for that matter): theological renewal and authority and interpretation;<sup>6</sup> two deal with the School of Gilbert of Poitiers;<sup>7</sup> one looks at the School of Laon from the other side of the historical spectrum;<sup>8</sup> and the final essay looks at the two giants of the early scholastic world, Peter Lombard and Peter Abelard.<sup>9</sup> What is particularly interesting about Colish's body of published work, a corpus that includes over fifty scholarly articles, is that one could imagine it generating several other Variorum editions: one on the influence of classical authors on medieval authors, one on the relationship between philosophy, theology, and political theory in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

Colish's most recent monograph, *Ambrose's Patriarchs*, returns to Latin late antiquity for a look at how four treatises by the Bishop of Milan, Augustine's teacher in the Christian faith, portray Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph as models for human virtue.<sup>10</sup> As is always the case with Colish's works, this study puts Ambrose in his own personal context, both in the fourth century and in the way he is understood and appreciated in modern scholarship. She is particularly interested in why Ambrose thinks the patriarchs provide such useful examples to the Christian Everyman, and, of course, the philosophical and theological resources Ambrose brings to these portraits.

In spite of the great diversity of Colish's scholarship, then, she has always circled around a few important themes of intellectual transmission, influence, reinterpretation, and application. Her brilliant work has been rewarded and

<sup>6</sup> Marcia L. Colish, 'Systematic Theology and Theological Practice in the Twelfth Century', *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 18 (1988), 135–56, and 'Authority and Interpretation in Scholastic Theology', in *Religious Identity and the Problem of Historical Foundations: The Foundational Character of Authoritative Sources in the History of Christianity and Judaism*, ed. by Judith Frishman and others (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 369–86.

<sup>7</sup> Marcia L. Colish, 'Gilbert, the Early Porretans, and Peter Lombard: Semantics and Theology', in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains: Aux origines de la logique modernorum*, ed. by Jean Jolivet and Alain de Libera (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1987), pp. 229–50, and 'Early Porretan Theology', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 46 (1989), 58–79.

<sup>8</sup> Marcia L. Colish, 'Another Look at the School of Laon', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et historique du moyen âge*, 53 (1986), 7–22.

<sup>9</sup> Marcia L. Colish, 'Peter Lombard and Abelard: The *Opinio nominalium* and Divine Transcendence', *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 1–17.

<sup>10</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Ambrose's Patriarchs: Ethics for the Common Man* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005).

furthered by fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the Institute for Advanced Study, the National Humanities Center, the Woodrow Wilson Center, the American Academy in Rome, and the Rockefeller Foundation's Villa Serbelloni on Lake Como, just to mention the most prominent. She is the recipient of awards from the Medieval Academy of America, the Yale Graduate School Alumni Society, Toronto's Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, and the University of Dayton.

Over the course of her career, Colish has also collected the admiration and affection of many professional friends who respect her wisdom, enthusiasm, and generosity. As might be expected, they cover a broad swath of the fields of medieval studies, and like Colish's own works, give a microcosm of the possibilities of intellectual history. Many of these scholars were her students, including several generations at Oberlin, where she taught for almost forty years before retiring as the Frederick B. Artz Professor of History in 2001; others were the graduate students she taught as a visiting professor at Yale after her retirement. But Colish also had lasting influence on a number of young scholars she met at conferences and in research venues, who benefited enormously from her advice, in the deepest sense of intellectual companionship, even if they were never technically her students. Her affability, keen interest in the work of others, and unfailing generosity allowed many different types of scholars to benefit from her wisdom and insight into Western intellectual history. The authors collected here include intellectual fellow-travellers from many different stages of her career.

The essays in this volume are a splendid testimony to this heritage. Great themes, and utterly basic topics of far-reaching importance, are brought up and treated with perspicacity in the essays that follow, responding to the breadth and importance of the issues astutely identified and thoroughly worked over by Marcia L. Colish herself. In the first essay, the accepted but inconclusively defined concept of 'school' comes under William J. Courtenay's scrutiny. Richard Southern, in dealing with the 'School of Chartres' as Courtenay states, 'called attention to the dangers inherent in grouping writers around one teaching centre' (p. 14). Courtenay continues, and implements the discussion, with the pertinent question, did medieval intellectuals, writers, teachers think in terms of schools of thought, and if so at what times and places ... or, in other words, which designations are labels of convenience, implying a modern categorization which may be useful both for description and in bringing minds and activities of the Middle Ages close to a contemporary point of view, but for which there is little medieval validity? In other words, do these customary, familiar, labels unduly simplify

history — is this indeed a worthwhile goal — or do they have a vital, useful, connection to a discernible medieval, i.e., contemporaneous, reality? Labels and designations often give the impression that one knows more than is actually the case, and that it is not necessary to further define what is signified by the designation in question. Professor Courtenay has called the entire question of schools, as well as what is meant by this appellation, to task.

*Materia*, matter, materiality, are Grover A. Zinn's focus, since, not only is this a basic, outstandingly important consideration in general, but because it is a focus of Hugh of St Victor's treatise, *De archa Noe*. The 'material world' is in flux (as is presented by Aristotle in the *Physica*, since all material contains motion as well as propensity for change). The defining, delineatory, role of the important medieval concept of *figura* comes to the fore, as well as the possibility of shaping inner, invisible materiality, as Hugh responds directly to the Latin translation and commentary of Chalcidius on Plato's *Timaeus* with respect to the reciprocity and equivalence that exists between the inner, unseen, and outer visible 'substance'. Hugh here gives the example of colour as substance. The person of Christ in both humanity (visible) as well as divinity (invisible) awakes, shields, illumines, and nourishes, but all of these activities, understood from the standpoint of outward activity, are accomplished within and upon the inner *substantia* of the soul. Transformation, one of the propensities of *substantia*, can be accomplished within invisible as well as visible material, that is, also within the substance of the soul. This flies, of course, in the face of a more modern notion of 'matter' as necessarily visible and the transmission of reality primarily through the eyes. Reading, rightly, the Book of Creation as constituted by and containing God's presence as 'materiality' presented by Hugh is the final enquiry within Zinn's contribution, with the conclusion that the visible world both contains and reveals divine realities, that is, inherent, established meaning.

New fields of study, such as communication and 'media studies', or 'religious studies', contrasting with the traditional study of theology, although more in vogue today within university programmes of study, nevertheless often lack a cogent, defined, curriculum, as well as a homogeneous student body. Willemien Otten asks the intriguing question, 'How does Peter Abelard fit into this scene?' with the intriguing possibility that he would have taught communication studies with relish and verve. We will never know for sure, but, in the remaining pages of this fascinating contribution — particularly relevant in view of Marcia Colish's exceptional teaching capabilities — Otten explains why this might be the case, and in so doing brings up the topic of 'redeemed speech' as dialogue between the soul and body that constitutes yet another category of relationship to, and

communication with, God in addition to prayer and mediation. Marcia Colish has eloquently argued in her *Mirror of Language* that Augustine is an author whose interest in language is directly tied to Redemption. This argumentation serves as a basis for further consideration of a concept of 'redeemed speech' and a final beatific vision, that is, a culmination of communication within a mystical encounter with God. Human speech relies upon temporality, sequential time, of one thing following another, or prior/posterior positions. Perhaps only in liturgy is simultaneous presence made possible, at least within the mind. This simultaneity constitutes in effect, a unification of the temporal and eternal; but the entire discussion also joins Otten's contribution to Marcia Colish's continuing interest in the theory of signs.

Substance, as well as naming of substance as a topic is taken up by Mary J. Sirridge, since this topic is also one of crucial importance, both in medieval education generally, as well as increasing in rigour and intensity during the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Drawing upon medieval study of Priscian, with the subsequent commentary of Robert Kilwardby, Sirridge addresses a particularly difficult passage dealing with the difference between the *verbum substantivum* and the *verba vocativa*, things themselves and how they are designated; as she states, quoting Priscian,

[A]lthough nouns can be combined with both, the situation is different with pronouns, for no one says 'I am called I' (*ego nominor*) or 'You are called you' (*tu vocaris*). The reason, he says, is that the '<im>position of proper names' signalled by *vocor* and the like does not attach to the personal pronoun, 'though the <referent of the> substantive verb does inhere in things as named' — something's being called by a name implies that it exists, but not the other way around. It is thus not surprising that these verbs have differing syntax, he says, since verbs 'with different power' call for differing constructions, as we can see by noting that it is peculiar to verbs of willing to enter into constructions with the infinitive, as in 'I want to read' (*volo legere*) and 'I desire to know' (*cupio scire*). (p. 96)

These considerations, arguably, address the most important issue of the late thirteenth century, that is, the relationship of grammar to reality in terms of essence, naming, potentiality, and expression or perfection of that potential. In other words, the 'idiosyncracies of construction' (p. 90) have directly to do with meaning. How exactly this is accomplished is set forth by Priscian, Kilwardby, and Petrus Helias in his *Summa super Priscianum*, with the thoughtful interpretation of Mary Sirridge.

The intriguing title of M. B. Pranger's contribution, 'The Authenticity of the Devil in Gregory the Great, Anselm of Canterbury, and Heinrich von Kleist', leads the author into a statement that not only succinctly summarizes his study but connects this contribution to the work of Marcia Colish, most notably that

of the Stoic influence on Christianity both in late antiquity and into the Middle Ages. Pranger writes:

Generally speaking Christianity is supposed to have developed a specific idea of the human person as an integral, undivided entity [...]. The apostle Paul, for one, can be seen as one of the originators of this idea. For him, human faculties were no longer to be reduced to separate faculties of the mind as in Greek anthropology. Man was rather to be judged as being 'sold under sin' (Romans 7. 14) and vivified by the Holy Spirit. That being so, no stronghold in the human mind was to be appealed to in order to set oneself free, to exercise control over one's emotions and intellect, to be dispassionate and self-sufficient. (p. 117)

From this definitive statement, Pranger goes on to a discussion of *persona*, divided-undivided, capable of internal reconciliation with 'self' — or the contrary, and of a proliferation of wills at variance. What is to be done — what has in fact been done — with the idea of human integrity? As Pranger states, 'The urgency of those questions is further reinforced by the fact that, from a Christian viewpoint, it is evil and sin that set into motion processes of metamorphosis inside the human person' (p. 118), a topic that not only brings together Marcia Colish's earlier work, as we have seen, especially dealing with Augustine, but her later comprehensive study of Peter Lombard, and, most recently, Ambrose.

Again, Marcia Colish's impetus to a new surge of Lombard studies occasions Jason Taliadoros's study, 'The Lombard, Bandinus, Vacarius: Christological Nihilianism and the Anglo-Norman Realm'. As Taliadoros writes: 'More than any other scholar before her, Colish analysed the intellectual currents that led Peter to compose the *Sententiae*, the contemporary views with which this work engages in dialogue, as well as the "followers" of Peter who purported to disseminate the Lombard's ideas after his death' (p. 133). The Lombard, according to Colish, can be viewed as exemplary of a professionalism with respect to, eventually, university study of theology; secondly, again to Marcia Colish's mind, the Lombard refused to accept Christological nihilianism. Interfacing, carefully, Colish's study of the Lombard with his own, Taliadoros considers both of these positions — the Lombard's 'professionalism' as well as the nihilianism debate by considering them extended and applied to a quite different context, namely, the Anglo-Norman intellectual dialogues, a context that has been hitherto largely overlooked.

Gratian's *Concordia discordantium canonicum*, or the *Decretum*, provides the focus for Gary Macy's study, providing, as well, a close relationship with Marcia Colish's sustained interest in connections between the schools, canon law, and intellectual life, particularly of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Gary Macy, however, takes an unusual, hitherto relatively unexplored aspect, as

indicated by his title, 'Fake Fathers: Pseudonymous Sources and Forgeries as the Foundation for Canonical Teaching on Women in the Middle Ages'. What was actually included in this compendium which was taken as an authoritative body of texts, laws, proscriptions, assumed to be transmitted more or less directly from the early church fathers, other influential writers, and the proceedings of definitive councils, at decisive junctures of church history? Some of all that was included in the *Decretum* was indeed authentic, attributable to the source to which it was ascribed; some, it turns out, was not, but nevertheless of significant, consistent influence on the position of women in the church as well as their rights to preach, teach, and administer sacraments.

Gervase of Tilbury, an understudied, yet immensely productive, Latin Christian of the second half of the twelfth century is the topic of Edward Peters's engaging study; as he states,

[T]he occasions when Gervase considers religious misconduct or dissent from the perspective, not of a cleric with pastoral, magisterial, or disciplinary responsibilities, nor of a chronicler or epistolographer of the type that so frequently provides information on twelfth-century heterodoxy, and not even from that of a professional canonist, but from that of an extremely learned layman who has travelled up and down in the world, has formed firm opinions concerning religious truth and displays very little sympathy for those who contest its authoritative character. Recent scholarship has indicated the widening range of thinkers, including those who wrote for courts, who addressed and recorded the problem of heterodoxy in the late twelfth century, and Gervase was certainly one of them. (pp. 175–76)

Peters's own summary of the place and resonance of his study is a description of his contribution. In this, the entire notion of *Kaiserspiegel* not only comes to the fore but is definitively delineated. Gervase was 'an articulate, educated, lay example of early thirteenth-century Latin Christian orthodoxy' (p. 178), and as such is an exemplum of a directionality, stratum, and viewpoint to be seriously considered.

A common core of Christian ideas on the ways in which man may know God by faith unites Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante; but also, as a topic, it relates Marcia Colish's *The Mirror of Language* to Arjo Vanderjagt's contribution. Vanderjagt extends this nexus, or continuity, into the fifteenth-century *Devotio moderna*, and humanism, as seen in the programme of studies delineated by Rudolph Agricola's correspondence with Alexander Hegius of Deventer and Jacobus Barbirianus of Antwerp. In this quest for the knowledge of God as an ultimate reality, *per speculum in aenigmate*, words signify things, sense data leads to knowledge of the non-sensible, and the *artes liberales* obtain — and maintain — an important function, to be discussed in Vanderjagt's contribution

to this volume. Schools, programmes of study, sign and sense constitute the parameters of this consideration with a conclusion that again brings this study around to Marcia Colish's characterization of what Vanderjagt describes as 'four great medieval heroes' with the addition, carefully explained, of Agricola (p. 213).

Again, Nancy Van Deusen's contribution explores the late antiquity contribution to medieval Latin learning in terms of the significant Greek concept, *hyle*, translated by Chalcidius in his highly influential partial translation into Latin of Plato's *Timaeus* as *silva*. Chalcidius takes great pains, and goes into much detail, to explain his choice of this Latin term, which in effect brings more concrete implications into Plato's discussion of *materia-substantia-natura*. There is good reason for this, since both the term, *silva*, and what it encompasses include, for Chalcidius, all of the substance, both visible and invisible, and in equivalence, of the perceptible world. Chalcidius's choice of *silva* had far-reaching implications as well for the discipline of music, using as it does the unseen substance of sound. But the influence of the *Timaeus latinus* also extended to Cusanus and his discussion of how Creation could be understood and explained — how, indeed, God 'explains himself' to human beings in a mode of communication that can be comprehended, that is, using a *modus humaniter* to communicate the inexpressible.

Poggio Bracciolini's *De avaritia* (1428/29), and Niccolò Machiavelli's *Il principe* (1513/14) bring two of the more enigmatic, if notorious, works of the Italian Renaissance to the fore in Cary J. Nederman's contribution to this volume, which explores self-interest as a topic within the virtue/vice debate, as well as within a broader consideration of continuity, rupture, conventionality, and innovation with respect to emerging theories of governance. Rather than setting forth innovative new directionalities, it would seem, to Nederman's mind, that Poggio and Machiavelli constitute a crystallization and distillation of trends emerging during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that reconcile traditional classifications of principal virtues with commercial success. We have here, then, a heritage of argumentation concerning relationships between the virtues and vices negotiated to accommodate new, more immediate, and ultimately more apparent, practical goals.

E. Ann Matter also has recourse to Marcia Colish's seminal work focusing upon the influential forces in a history of ideas during what is now known as late antiquity. Colish has, according to Matter, 'dubbed the fourth- to seventh-century authors of this literature as "transmitters"' (p. 233), a group that includes Martianus Capella, Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Isidore of Seville, and who shared a sense of responsibility concerning their role in preserving and consciously transmitting an intellectual civilization not only to their own culture, but to future

generations as well. Other writers perhaps were not so conscious of their own role in preserving a cogent and identifiable heritage, but nevertheless maintained great influence in that regard. Professor Matter's contribution investigates just such a situation, that is, the influence of Macrobius, whose commentaries were and remained an important part of the school curriculum, on an early Italian humanist, Alberto Alfieri. As Matter states: 'Macrobius was especially influential in the Carolingian schools and among the twelfth-century Platonists, but his influence has also been seen in the Italian Renaissance' (p. 235), in for example the works of Dante, and Alberto Alfieri, who is the author of *Ogdoas*, a collection of eight dialogues between deceased members of the Visconti and Adorno families.

Joel Seltzer uses the occasion of a festival in the city of Prague to honour Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague to bring out and concentrate upon the important theological question which has, as well, implications for political, civic, and intellectual life, namely, whether *any* hero — or saint — was worthy of veneration, and on what basis. As Seltzer states, 'Czech theologians called into question feast days, pilgrimage, saintly intercession, the cult of relics and images, and all the other aspects of the cult of saints, around which so much of late medieval religious life revolved' (p. 276).

So, again, an utterly basic consideration, and one to which Marcia Colish has also substantially contributed — the topic of church reform — is brought into discussion, but with implications for the later boundaries of this volume, the humanist renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These boundaries also correspond to Colish's many-sided oeuvre, which includes topics, as we have noticed, from late antiquity and its heritage from, and interaction with, Stoicism to Machiavelli's milieu.

Any one of these authors cited above, and included within this volume, could have written, and no doubt would have enjoyed writing, this introduction, as all are united in common interests and so reflect the multiple preoccupations throughout the extremely productive professional and creative life of Marcia Colish — topics not only entered into with relish and discernment, but to which she has so authoritatively and substantially contributed.

## Mirrors of Twelfth-Century Thought



## SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

William J. Courtenay

One feature present in almost any history of medieval philosophy is the categorization of ideas and thinkers according to various intellectual traditions or currents of thought.<sup>1</sup> The writings and contribution of the leading minds of the past from Boethius to Ockham are usually assessed in terms of where these figures stood in relation to Neoplatonism, Aristotelian thought, Averroism, realism, nominalism, or numerous other currents. It is taken for granted that major medieval writers should have exercised a profound influence on others. Consequently historians have employed such adjectives as *Augustinian*, *Victorine*, or abstract nouns such as *Thomism*, *Scotism*, or *Ockhamism*. And the valleys that lie between these great peaks of learning will almost invariably be

<sup>1</sup> This paper began as a lecture at the University of Leiden in December 1986 and was circulated at the conference on 'Nominalism in the Twelfth Century' at Madison in October 1991 and subsequently made available to interested others. Since it has been cited (e.g., Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, ed. by A. J. Vanderjagt, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 41, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994) I, 18) and new texts and literature on the subject have since appeared, this volume in honour of a leading historian of twelfth-century thought seems an appropriate place to publish it, in revised form.

<sup>1</sup> For example Étienne Gilson's *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), where one encounters the categories of Apologists, Alexandrians, Cappadocians, Platonists, Victorines, Bonaventurian School, Thomism, Averroism, Albertists, Second Augustinian School, Scotism, Nominalism and Second Averroism. Fortunately, in Gilson's account the particular features of individual writers are not lost underneath the collectivity those labels would seem to imply. For more recent discussion, see *Schools of Thought in the Christian Tradition*, ed. by Patrick Henry (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), especially Marcia L. Colish, 'Teaching and Learning Theology in Medieval Paris', pp. 106–24.

peopled by disciples defending, expanding, or modifying the work of a master, or eclectic thinkers drawing upon several different traditions.

Doubts about the validity or descriptive accuracy of these labels and this methodological approach have been raised from time to time, yet the 'school' model endures both because it is thought to reflect the reality of the medieval past and because its neat categories give a dramatic structure to historical writing that allows for change as well as continuity, for the individuality of the great as well as the discipleship of the not-so-great.<sup>2</sup>

Many decades ago, in a revisionary and controversial essay on the School of Chartres, R. W. Southern called attention to the dangers inherent in grouping writers around one teaching centre, or making into a school of thought what might better be described as an approach common to an entire region or intellectual elite across a generation or more.<sup>3</sup> If one of the legacies of Southern's analysis at that time was to substitute a Parisian for a Chartrain geographical focus when describing twelfth-century Christian Platonism or Platonic humanism, a more important legacy was to question the assumptions that linked a specific school (cathedral or monastic) with a school of thought, and to disassociate the latter from what were only shared viewpoints and presuppositions of most scholars in a period.

The following remarks explore a different aspect of this problem, namely the degree to which schools of thought reflect a medieval reality or instead, to a large degree, have been superimposed on medieval philosophy and theology by later

<sup>2</sup> Among those who have questioned the legitimacy of the 'schools of thought' approach, especially with reference to nominalism, are Heinrich Schepers, 'Holkot contra dicta Crathorn', *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 79 (1972), 106–36 (pp. 135–36); and Neal Ward Gilbert, 'Ockham, Wyclif and the "Via Moderna"', in *Antiqui und Moderni*, ed. by A. Zimmermann (Berlin: Schöningh, 1974), pp. 85–125.

<sup>3</sup> R. W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 61–85. For criticisms and modifications to Southern's thesis see Peter Dronke, 'New Approaches to the School of Chartres', *Anuario de estudios medievales*, 6 (1971), 117–40; Nikolaus M. Häring, 'Chartres and Paris Revisited', in *Essays in Honour of Anton Charles Pegis*, ed. by J. Reginald O'Donnell (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974), pp. 268–329; Roberto Giacone, 'Masters, Books and Library at Chartres According to the Cartularies of Notre-Dame and Saint-Père', *Vivarium*, 12 (1974), 30–51. Subsequent statements from Southern can be found in his *Platonism, Scholastic Method and the School of Chartres: Stenton Lecture, 1978* (Reading: University of Reading, 1979); 'The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 113–37; see also G. C. Garfagnini, 'L'attività storico-filosofica nel secolo XII: Giovanni di Salisbury', *Medioevo*, 16 (1990), 23–42.

historians. Did medieval schoolmen think in terms of schools of thought and if so, at what times and places did this occur, which schools did they recognize, what precisely did they mean by those labels, and what does the use of such labels indicate about the period? Or, if these categories are mostly modern inventions aiding the work of descriptive history, to what degree are they valid, whether or not those labels were ever used in the medieval period? It is the task of intellectual historians to see influences, connections, and developments that were not noticed or discussed by those who lived through them and to find appropriate labels. But we must always be aware which ones are modern labels of convenience ('Augustinian', 'courtly love', 'Chartrain', 'Victorine'), which medieval labels were created after the fact, and which ones describe groups contemporary with the creation of those labels. Southern, in the essay cited above, was exploring the substance that lay behind the modern labels of 'Chartrain' and 'School of Chartres'. I want to look, instead, at the purpose of, and the substance that lies behind, the labels actually familiar to some medieval schoolmen. Since I have dealt elsewhere with this problem for the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, I shall concentrate here on the previous period, particularly the twelfth century.<sup>4</sup>

The practice of attributing one or more philosophical doctrines to a group of thinkers attached to some particular teacher or place of study has a long history. Plato referred to the Pythagoreans and the disciples of Parmenides.<sup>5</sup> Aristotle's account of earlier Greek metaphysics and natural philosophy in the opening chapters of his *Metaphysics* mentions schools of thought as well as individual figures.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the Stoics and Epicureans were added to the list.

These labels embraced those who studied under a specific master at a school located in a particular city and building (or even part of a building) as well as those, elsewhere or later, who followed in that tradition or subscribed to those beliefs. Beyond whatever reality they may have had as actual groups or as self-identification, they served the useful purpose of categorizing past ideas and simplifying their history. It was helpful to think in terms of schools of thought, to see individual thinkers as members of some party or group, and to see an underlying

<sup>4</sup> William J. Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), chap. 6; 'Antiqui and Moderni in Late Medieval Thought', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 48 (1987), 3–10; and *Changing Approaches to Fourteenth-Century Thought*, Étienne Gilson Series, 29 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, VII.530.

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I.3–7; cf. *Physics*, III.5.

unity among several points of philosophical dogma. To the extent that one identified oneself as being a Stoic or a Platonist, these philosophical schools were intellectual counterparts to religious affiliation. The adherent belonged to a group that had basic tenets that explained the origin and nature of the universe, the goal of life and how to achieve it, or the acquisition of virtue and knowledge. To criticize one or more of the fundamental assumptions of a teacher or school was tantamount to breaking off and establishing a new school of philosophy.<sup>7</sup>

Something approaching a standard list of schools (*sectae*) had emerged by the second century of the Christian era, with each school identified by a few basic doctrines. Sometimes the list appeared in an etymological context, where the schools identified by the name of the founder were differentiated from those that derived from a place of teaching. Thus Tertullian in his *Apologeticum* (c. 197) defended the appropriateness of Christians taking the name of Christ by referring to the Platonists, Epicureans, and Pythagoreans, who took their names 'from the founders of their systems', while other groups took their name from the location of the school.<sup>8</sup> This list was repeated and augmented by Isidore of Seville, who added the Peripatetics to the list of those who, like the Stoics and Academicians, took their name from the place of teaching.<sup>9</sup> More often, however, these schools appear as part of an historical background for Christianity, for early Christian heresies, or for natural and moral philosophy. Justin Martyr, in the opening years of the second century, mentioned the Socratics, Platonists, Stoics, Peripatetics, Theoretics, and Pythagoreans.<sup>10</sup> Irenaeus mentioned the Stoics, Cynics, and Pythagoreans.<sup>11</sup> Augustine provided a short history of pagan philosophy in the

<sup>7</sup> This same pattern holds true for early Islamic philosophy and theology, as in the common beliefs of the Mutazilites, who separated themselves from the traditional group within the mosque at Basra, or the Asharites who attacked the fundamental assumptions of the Mutazilites.

<sup>8</sup> Tertullian, *Apologeticum*, chap. 3, ed. by Eligius Dekkers, in *Opera*, 2 vols, CCSL, 1–2 (1954), I, 92: 'At enim secta oditur in nomine utique sui auctoris. Quid novi, si aliqua disciplina de magistro cognomentum sectatoribus suis inducit? Nonne philosophi de auctoribus suis nuncupantur Platonici, Epicurei, Pythagorici? etiam a locis conventiculorum et stationum suarum Stoici, Academici? aequae medici ab Erasistrato et grammatici ab Aristarcho, coqui etiam ab Apicio?'

<sup>9</sup> Isidore, *Etymologiae*, VIII.6, in PL, LXXXII, col. 305: 'Divisi sunt autem et hi in haeresibus suis, habentes quidam nomina ex auctoribus, ut Platonici, Epicurei, Pythagorici; alii a locis conventiculorum et stationum suarum, ut Peripatetici, Stoici, Academici'. Later (PL, LXXXII, cols 306–07) Isidore refers to the 'Cynici' and 'Gymnosophistae'. See the discussion in Jacques Fontaine, *Isidore de Seville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1959), p. 709.

<sup>10</sup> Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Typho*, chaps 1–2, in PG, VI, cols 474–75.

<sup>11</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, II.14, in PG, VII, col. 752.

opening chapters of Book VIII of his *City of God*. His account is dominated by the master/disciple relationship and by schools of philosophy, among which he included the Italian (Pythagorean) school, the Ionian school (founded by Thales of Miletus), the Socratics, Platonists, Epicureans, and Stoics.<sup>12</sup> By the late fifth and sixth centuries, the Alexandrian commentators, with a different purpose in mind but combining both approaches, had divided the origin of names of earlier schools into seven categories, of which place of teaching and descent from a 'heresiarch' were only two.<sup>13</sup>

Some features of the early Christian view of schools of thought should be noted. First, all the schools were pre-Christian and Greek.<sup>14</sup> These schools, particularly the Platonists and Stoics, might be seen as continuing into the Christian era, but writers of this period, be they pagan or Christian, did not perceive new philosophical schools being established in their day, in contrast to the proliferation of schismatic and heretical sects that were named according to a founder, place, event, or point of doctrine. Secondly, the list of schools became standardized with little variation, just as did the positions associated with each label. Schools were linked with one or two ideas or viewpoints, and that association was repeated by later writers and acquired a stereotypical form. Thirdly, school names were often used as a means of labelling positions that were being rejected, usually in the area of natural or moral philosophy. They were not a means of self-identification but a way of characterizing or identifying the views of others. Finally, these labels ostensibly referred to members of a group, not to ideologies. The references are to 'Platonic', 'Stoic', etc., not to Platonism or Stoicism, although this was a linguistic possibility, as Neal Gilbert has noted.<sup>15</sup> This

<sup>12</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, VIII, in *De civitate Dei, Libri I–X*, ed. by B. Dombart and A. Kalb, CCSL, 47 (1955), pp. 217–19, where he speaks of 'Italicum genus auctorem habuit Pythagoram Samium [...]'. 'Ionici vero generis princeps fuit Thales [...]'. 'Iste autem Tales, ut successores etiam propagaret [...]'. 'Iste Anaximenes discipulum et successorem reliquit [...]'. 'Anaxagorae successit auditor eius Archelaus'. 'Socrates huius discipulus fuisse perhibetur, magister Platonis [...]'. '[...] diversas inter se Socratici de isto fine sententias habuerunt, ut (quod vix credible est unius magistri potuisse facere sectatores) [...]'. '[...] ubi Pythagoreorum fama celebrabatur'. And later: 'Platonici', 'Stoici', and 'Epicurei'. Throughout this section Augustine uses the term *genus* rather than *schola*.

<sup>13</sup> On the late school of Alexandrian Neoplatonism and the descriptions of the schools contained in the *Prolegomena philosophiae* and the introductions to Aristotle's *Categories* of Ammonius, Simplicius, Philoponus, and Elias, see Fontaine, *Isidore*, p. 709; L. M. de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, 2 vols (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1962–67), I, 29–30.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine's 'Italicum genus', the Pythagoreans, belonged to southern Italy (Magna Graecia).

<sup>15</sup> Gilbert, 'Ockham, Wyclif, and the "Via Moderna"', pp. 118–19.

preference to label the members (*-istae*, *-ici*, and *-ienses* endings) rather than the ideology (*-ismus* ending) continued throughout the Middle Ages.

How much of that approach carried over into the early Middle Ages? Did they continue to think in terms of schools of thought, either in the past or in their own day? Any reader of Augustine's *City of God*, Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, or Isidore's *Etymologies* (works known to any well-educated cleric or monk) would certainly have been familiar with the idea of 'schools of philosophy' and the idea of a succession of masters and disciples. How relevant these or other groupings might seem for describing the intellectual traditions of subsequent Roman culture (as early medieval writers saw themselves) is another matter. As remarked earlier (in n. 7, above), there is reason to believe that the idea of schools of thought remained operative in the philosophical psychology of Muslim society from the eighth to the eleventh century, particularly among theologians (Mutakallims). In the Christian West, however, from the sixth century on, it is more difficult to find evidence either for the presence of contemporary schools of thought or the perception that earlier philosophical traditions were or could be a way of characterizing contemporary thought, although they did use pejorative theological labels, such as 'Arian', 'Sabellian', 'Pelagian', etc. They seem to have shared the perspective of Augustine, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Isidore, and others, that schools of thought belonged to the pre-Christian past, which the new faith replaced. Philosophical sects at best led toward or possessed part of the one true faith, but they had no further meaning for Christians. It is true that differing exegetical and doctrinal points of view might be seen geographically, as in the Christian Alexandrians or the School of Antioch, but different points of view often ended in the declared orthodoxy of one and the heresy of the other. Even where the spirit of philosophy lived on, as in Boethius's *Consolation*, these earlier schools ('the inept schools of Epicureans, Stoics, and others') had only pieces or fragments of the Truth torn from the whole garment Sophia had woven for herself.<sup>16</sup> One searches in vain in the writings of the Carolingian period for references to early medieval, or contemporary, schools of thought, either philosophical or theological. Platonism in its many forms was the substructure upon which almost all of early medieval thought was based, but in the seventh to tenth centuries neither Platonism nor any other 'ism' was a category through which they understood their own thought or its past history.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, bk 1, pr. 3.

<sup>17</sup> When historians have used such phrases as 'School of Auxerre' or 'School of Laon' to describe certain monastic or cathedral schools in the Carolingian period, they have in mind a

One of the striking features of twelfth-century education and intellectual life is the re-emergence of schools of thought, or, at the very least, the re-emergence of the idea of schools of thought. This did not occur until late in the second quarter of the twelfth century. Despite the growth of teaching centres and prominent teachers in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, contemporaries did not employ school labels based on master or place. They did not speak of Berengarii, Anselmi (either of Bec or Laon), Roscelini, Carnotenses (those of Chartres), Turonenses (of Tours), Laudunenses (of Laon), or Remenses (of Reims). The phenomenon does not begin to appear until the 1130s (thus late in the careers of Peter Abelard and Gilbert of Poitiers) and seems strongest in the 1150–80 period, and therefore almost a second-generation phenomenon.<sup>18</sup>

A half-century ago R. W. Hunt compiled a list of twelfth-century schools in the fields of logic and grammar.<sup>19</sup> His examples were drawn from a gloss on

succession of scholars or teachers, their writings, and the books they and others collected for the library. Schools as successions of teachers has become a more controversial issue since Southern's and Giacone's critiques of J. A. Clerval's *Les Écoles de Chartres au moyen âge* (Paris: Picard, 1895); see above, n. 3. Some recent scholars have chosen to put the emphasis on fraternal association, reflected by the word *circle*, rather than talk in terms of schools of thought; see John J. Contreni, *The Cathedral School of Laon from 850 to 930: Its Manuscripts and Masters*, Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung, 29 (Munich: Ardeo-Gesellschaft, 1978); John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology and Philosophy in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Although the School of Auxerre has come closest to being viewed as a school of thought, the Christian Neoplatonism it reflects was probably typical of most monastic and cathedral schools in the ninth and early tenth centuries. I know of no ninth-century references to writers or ideas that use such labels as 'Autisiodorenses', 'Laudunenses', or 'Remenses'; for scholars associated with Auxerre, Laon, or Reims, much less *schola* or *secta* Autisiodorensis or groups identified by the name of a 'founding' master.

<sup>18</sup> An alternative picture is presented by Yukio Iwakuma, who points to a *sententia vocalium* on universal concepts (that universals are *voces*, not *res*) connected to the teaching of a master John, teacher of Roscelin, around 1080. He maintains that the 'Vocales' of the late eleventh century (Master John and Roscelin of Compiègne) became the 'Nominales' of the twelfth century (Abelard and his followers), and that the core issue was the referent of universals, to which other theses were later added or attributed, some incorrectly. See Iwakuma, "Vocales," or Early Nominalists', *Traditio*, 47 (1992), 37–111; 'Twelfth-Century Nominales: The Posthumous School of Peter Abelard', *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 97–109; 'Nominalia', *Didascalica*, 1 (1995), 47–88; 'The Realism of Anselm and his Contemporaries', in *Anselm: Aosta, Bec, and Canterbury*, ed. by D. Luscombe and G. R. Evans (Manchester: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 120–35.

<sup>19</sup> R. W. Hunt, 'Studies on Priscian in the Twelfth Century, II: The School of Ralph of Beauvais', *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies*, 2 (1950), 1–56 (pp. 50–55) (repr. in Hunt, *The History of Grammar in the Middle Ages*, Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, 3 (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1980), pp. 39–94 (pp. 88–93)). Some of these groups

Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*, known by its incipit as *Promisimus* and found in a manuscript in the Bodleian Library.<sup>20</sup> The text was almost certainly written at Paris in the second half of the twelfth century. Hunt dated it to the last quarter, but L. M. de Rijk has suggested the third quarter of the twelfth century, saying that it possibly derived from the lectures of Robert Blund.<sup>21</sup> The schools mentioned there are the 'Albricani', whom Hunt identifies as the pupils of Alberic of Reims,<sup>22</sup> or elsewhere, as the disciples of Master Alberic, teacher of John of Salisbury;<sup>23</sup> the 'Montani', presumably disciples of one or more masters who taught on the Mont-Sainte-Geneviève, and assumed by de Rijk to be another name for the disciples of Master Alberic and Robert of Melun;<sup>24</sup> the 'Melidunenses' or '*secta*

are mentioned in Émile Lesne, *Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France*, v: *Les Écoles de la fin du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Lille: Giard, and Paris: Champion, 1940), pp. 212–41, but Lesne concentrated on individual masters.

<sup>20</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud lat. 67, fols 20<sup>r</sup>–88<sup>v</sup>; edited by Karin Margareta Fredborg, 'Promisimus', *Cahiers de l'Institut du moyen-âge Grec et Latin* (subsequently cited as *CIMAGL*), 70 (1999), 81–228.

<sup>21</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 255–57.

<sup>22</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, pp. 78, 88. The label 'Albricani' is not used elsewhere to my knowledge, although there is extensive evidence on the disciples of Master Alberic. Behind the name of Alberic in the *Fons philosophiae* of the Victorine Godfrey of St Victor, written around 1175–80, readers may have been intended to understand Alberic's disciples.

<sup>24</sup> L. M. de Rijk, 'Some New Evidence on Twelfth-Century Logic: Alberic and the School of Mont Ste Geneviève (Montani)', *Vivarium*, 4 (1966), 1–57, especially pp. 17–20. There are other references to the 'Montani' beyond this Priscian gloss. In the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* (late twelfth century) they are said to reject the idea that a *totum disgregativum* or a *totum continguum* are many (that is, their parts); see S. Ebbesen, K. M. Fredborg, and L. O. Nielsen, 'Compendium logicae Porretanum ex codice Oxoniensi collegii corporis christi 250: A Manual of Porretan Doctrine by a Pupil of Gilbert', *CIMAGL*, 46 (1983), 38–39. In a twelfth-century manuscript originally from the Cistercian monastery of Eberbach (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud lat. 105), containing theological questions that are probably Parisian, this same position on the relation of parts to the whole is applied to the body of Christ and attributed to the 'Montani' in the margin: 'Item queritur utrum Christus habuit partes: animam et corpus et caput et pedes. Ad hoc quidam [Montani in margin] dicunt quod et habuit has partes et hoc(?) et quod alia pars est vel(?) persona ex illis composita. Non tamen aliquid est ex illis compositum, quia nulla res(?) sed alia persona. Contra hoc habuit corpus et animam ut habitus, ergo non ut partes. Immo in quantum homo, habuit ut partes; in quantum Deus, ut habitus. Alii tamen dicunt quod non habuit' (fol. 249<sup>va</sup>). Examination of the manuscript and transcription (except for minor changes) were done by Jeremy Catto, who noted that the marginal 'Montani' is in a contemporary hand, but not that of the text scribe. A slightly different transcription is given in Iwakuma, 'Twelfth-Century Nominales', p. 177.

*Meliduna*', identified by Hunt as a group from Melun and by Southern as disciples of Robert of Melun;<sup>25</sup> the 'Porretani', who were disciples of Gilbert of Poitiers (known as Gilbert de la Porrée, or perhaps more accurately Gilbert Porreta);<sup>26</sup> and the 'Helistae', who were disciples of Petrus Helias. Since the *Promisimus* text does not mention the 'Parvipontani', a school associated with the Petit-Pont in Paris according to Hunt, or the disciples of Adam of Petit-Pont (Parvipontanus) according to Southern and de Rijk, Hunt conjectured that the *Promisimus* gloss came from that group.<sup>27</sup> Since 1950 many of the texts associated with these schools or their founding masters have been edited and commented on.<sup>28</sup> The

<sup>25</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 55; Southern, 'Schools of Paris', p. 114. Both 'Meludina' and 'Meliduna' (and related forms) are found in manuscripts, but 'Meliduna' and 'Melidunenses' are preferable; see de Rijk's, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 286. The spelling of 'secta Meludina' is found uniquely in London, British Library, MS Royal II.D.30. A 'sententia Melidunensium', namely from the false nothing follows ('ex falso nihil sequi'), is mentioned in the *Chronicle* of Jocelin of Brakelond, ed. by H. E. Butler (London: Nelson, 1949), p. 35, which can be dated to around 1185. Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 89, also notes the 'secta Meludin' text in Royal II.D.30, fols 95<sup>r</sup>–104<sup>r</sup>, and it is discussed by de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 23–24, 282–86; portions of it have been edited in the introduction to the *Compendium logicae Porretanum*, CIMA GL, 46 (1983), viii–ix. The same thesis ('nichil sequitur ex falso') is found there (*Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 283). Although there were other masters by the name of Robert who taught logic at Paris, for example Robert Amiclas and Robert Blund (among whose writings in Royal II.D.30 the 'secta Meludina' text appears), it has generally been assumed that the disciples of Robert of Melun are intended by the label 'Robertini' in Godfrey of St Victor's *Fons philosophiae*, ed. by P. Michaud-Quantin, *Analecta mediaevalia Namurcensia*, 8 (Namur: Godenne, 1956), p. 44, especially since Godfrey remarks: 'Isti falsum litigant nihil sequi vere'.

<sup>26</sup> Gilbert's period of teaching in Paris is discussed by Southern, 'Schools of Paris', p. 127.

<sup>27</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 56; Southern, 'Schools of Paris', p. 114; de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, I, 62–81; II, pt 1, 159–60, 175, 277. The 'Parvipontani' are described (but without label) in Godfrey of St Victor, *Fons philosophiae*, pp. 44–45. They are also mentioned, according to Hunt, *History of Grammar*, pp. 92–93, in the *Ars versificatoria* of Gervase of Melkley, written in the early thirteenth century. If de Rijk's conjecture that the 'Adamitae' mentioned in *Tractatus Emmeranus de impossibili positione* (Giacone, 'Masters, Books and Library at Chartres', pp. 94–123) refers to the disciples of Adam Parvipontanus (also known as Adam of Balsham) is correct, then that school either went by two names for the same master, or the 'Parvipontani' were named from the place of teaching in Paris, not from the name of a teacher; see also de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, I, 62–81. William of Auxerre refers to the 'Adamitae' (*opinio Adamitarum*) on a position not associated with the 'Parvipontani'. Auxerre's editor has chosen to see 'Adamitarum' as a scribal error for 'Amauricianorum' rather than as a reference to the opinions of the 'Adamitae'; see William of Auxerre (Autisiodorensis), *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 14, chap. 1, ed. by J. Ribaillier (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1980), p. 261.

<sup>28</sup> For example, the *Ars disserendi* of Adam of Balsham of the Petit-Pont (Parvipontanus) in 1132, ed. by L. Minio-Paluello, *Twelfth Century Logic*, 1 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura,

'Nominales' or '*secta Nominalium*' should be added to this list of labels, along with the 'Reales', the 'Gualielli', and the 'Coppauses'.<sup>29</sup>

Before examining a few of these schools, a number of initial observations can be made. First, it should be noted that the terms *schola* and *scholae* are never used to describe the collectivity of a master and his pupils. By the twelfth century these terms refer to places of teaching, the classrooms in which a master lectured.<sup>30</sup> When a group is mentioned, the name is derived from the master of the group, or possibly from the place of teaching, or occasionally from a point of doctrine (as in the case of the 'Nominales' and 'Reales'), and sometimes prefaced by the term *opinio*.

Secondly, most if not all of these groups are Parisian, as Southern surmised. This is true not only of Hunt's list, which was derived from a document written at Paris, presumably for a Parisian audience. It is also true of references in other works on grammar and logic. Those that label opinions and refer to schools were written in and for a Parisian setting. This probably applies to the 'Nominales' as well. Not only were these schools Parisian; the idea of identifiable and competing schools may also have been Parisian. Outside that milieu the educated elite of northern Europe may not have thought in terms of schools of philosophy or theology.

Thirdly, as Southern also suspected, most if not all of these schools are named after teachers, not places of teaching, either topographical or institutional. It may at first appear that some school names referred to students resident in particular districts in greater Paris, for example the 'Montani' on Mont-Sainte-Geneviève and the 'Parvipontani' along the Petit-Pont. Godfrey of St Victor's description of the latter group seems to suggest that their name was derived from their surroundings.<sup>31</sup> But this is probably not the case, even for the 'Montani', and the other

1956), pp. 3–111; various treatises and commentaries that, on the basis of content, de Rijk has associated with the schools of Alberic (or 'Montani'), the 'Parvipontani', or the 'Melidunenses' and published in his *Logica modernorum*; and works associated with Petrus Helias and Gilbert of Poitiers that have appeared in issues of *CIMAGL*. New groupings have been created; see C. H. Kneepkens, 'Clarembald of Arras and the Notionistae', in *La Tradition médiévale des catégories (XII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, ed. by J. Biard and I. Rosier-Catach (Louvain-la-Neuve: Éditions de l'Institut supérieur de philosophie, 2003), pp. 105–26.

<sup>29</sup> Some of the numerous references to the 'Nominales' and 'Reales' will be discussed below. The 'Gualielli' are mentioned in the *Introductiones Montane minores* (de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 2, 17–18). For the 'Coppauses' see the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* in *CIMAGL*, 46 (1983), 39.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, the use of *schola* in Abelard's *Historia calamitatum*.

<sup>31</sup> Godfrey of St Victor, *Fons philosophiae*, p. 44: 'In quo sibi singuli domos statuerunt, unde pontis incole nomen acceperunt.'

group names do not easily construe in this manner. The 'Porretani' almost certainly derived their name from Gilbert of Poitiers. And if names were derived from districts, it is surprising that there is no group name for the collectivity of masters and students on the Ile or at Notre Dame. Moreover, it is harder to understand the supposition of group uniformity and the defence of school positions if they were based simply on the place of disputation and/or residence rather than alliance with one or two masters. Because of this, most scholars have taken the label 'Parvipontani' to refer to the disciples of Adam of Petit-Pont. The label 'Montani' is not as easily explained, but may have a similar solution. It has usually been seen as a label for students of one or more masters who taught on the Mont. Thus it is particularly associated by de Rijk with the disciples of Alberic, although it could include or refer to disciples of Robert of Melun, and perhaps even to those of Abelard.<sup>32</sup> The hypothesis that it was a label for the disciples of one particular master will be examined below.

For Southern, these school names reflect the open atmosphere of early twelfth-century learning, when the reputation of masters (not the school or place) drew students, when masters moved their schools often, and when students studied under many masters. This multiplicity and competition among masters lasted throughout most of the twelfth century and was an intermediate stage between the control over teaching in Paris formerly exercised by the bishop, chancellor, and scholasticus of the cathedral school (along with the authority exercised by the Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève over much of the Mont) and the control exercised later by the corporation of masters in the early thirteenth century.<sup>33</sup> Southern and Le Goff are undoubtedly correct in stressing the role of independent teachers in twelfth-century Paris.<sup>34</sup> Only the cathedral of Notre Dame had one or more recognized teaching positions that were occupied by a succession of

<sup>32</sup> De Rijk, 'Some New Evidence', and *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 288–89.

<sup>33</sup> Wim Verbaal, 'The Council of Sens Reconsidered: Masters, Monks, or Judges?', *Church History*, 74 (2005), 460–93 (p. 493), dates the decline of individual, charismatic teachers earlier, soon after 1150.

<sup>34</sup> Jacques Le Goff, *Les Intellectuels au moyen âge* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1957), especially pp. 67–69. While individual teachers were acting in an entrepreneurial manner, selling learning in a market economy, this phenomenon was not a product of the commercial urban setting, although the latter undoubtedly provided models, and demographic and economic growth provided expanding numbers of students with the means and leisure to seek instruction. The teachers themselves benefited from the freedom to set up a school, often in very small towns, under royal and non-episcopal authority, and benefited from the freedom of students to study where and with whom they chose.

masters. Abelard described the position in philosophy (or the verbal arts) at the cathedral — occupied in sequence by William of Champeaux, by a student of William contemporary with Abelard (possibly Robert of Melun), by Abelard, and by a rival of Abelard's — as the chair (*sedes*) or school (*studium*) of dialectic.<sup>35</sup> The Benedictine monasteries of St Germain-des-Prés and St Denis probably offered little or no advanced instruction in the arts or theology, even for their members.<sup>36</sup> The Austin Canons at the monastery of St Victor included a number of very learned and prolific writers, but it is unlikely that St Victor was regularly engaged in teaching significant numbers of students from outside their community, despite Abelard's remark that its founder, William of Champeaux, had opened a public school there.<sup>37</sup> The Victorines (a modern, not a twelfth-century label) were members of that religious community, and evidence that St Victor opened its doors generally to external students after the period of William of Champeaux is not compelling.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 2, in PL, CLXXVIII, col. 120.

<sup>36</sup> There may still have been oblates in the early twelfth century who required training in Latin, chant, and the computus.

<sup>37</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, in PL, CLXXVIII, col. 119: 'sed in ipso quoque monasterio, ad quod se causa religionis contulerat, statim more solito publicas exercuit scholas'.

<sup>38</sup> This issue is still *sub judice*, and much depends on how a small number of examples are read. For contributors to the debate, see Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 18 n. 9. It is well known that Peter Lombard was for a time at St Victor and was familiar with Hugh of St Victor's *De sacramentis*. However, as Bernard of Clairvaux's 'letter of introduction' to Gilduin, Abbot of St Victor, on behalf of the Lombard makes clear, Peter sought hospitality (room and board) during his last remaining months in Paris. Bernard says nothing about study with Hugh. Responding to a request from the Bishop of Lucca, Bernard had earlier arranged for Peter's support while studying at Reims, and was again helping him find support before Peter's imminent departure from Paris; PL, CLXXXII, col. 619: 'Lucensis episcopus [...] commendavit mihi virum venerabilem P. Lombardum, rogans ut ei parvo tempore, quo moraretur in Francia causa studii, per amicos nostros victui necessaria providerem: quod effeci, quandiu Remis moratus est. Nunc commorantem Parisius vestrae dilectioni commendo [...] rogans ut placeat vobis providere ei in cibo per breve tempus, quod facturum est hic usque ad Nativitatem beatae virginis Mariae [Sept. 8].' If Peter left Paris not long after obtaining meals and possibly accommodations at St Victor, there would not have been time for a significant period of instruction. On the other hand, since Peter went to Paris for study and shows familiarity with the thought and writings of Peter Abelard, Gilbert of Poitiers, and others, it is inconceivable that he would not have taken advantage of his time at St Victor, however brief, to consult its library and become familiar with Hugh's thought, whether through lectures or writings we do not know. The claim that Clarembald of Arras studied under Hugh of St Victor is stronger. Clarembald acknowledges his debt (N. M. Häring, *Life and Works of Clarembald of Arras* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1965)): 'ut doctorem Theodorici Britonis

Similarly, the other house of Austin Canons, the abbey of Sainte-Geneviève, does not appear to have offered instruction outside the community, if even there. Those who taught on the Mont-Sainte-Geneviève did so as independent masters, although they were probably authorized to do so (an early stage of the license to teach — *licentia docendi*) by the person responsible for teaching in that district, namely the Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève. In any case, they did not teach at or for the abbey. Nor should we assume they taught in succession, as if there were one or two recognized positions or chairs in philosophy or theology to which masters were appointed by the Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève.<sup>39</sup> For a time Abelard, Alberic,

[Thierry of Chartres] et Hugonis de Sancto Victore [...] lectiones imitarer' (p. 64); 'Has causas aliquantulum mihi pertinaciter investiganti doctores mei venerabiles, Hugo videlicet de Sancto Victore et Theodoricus Brito reddidere' (p. 69); 'Theodoricus meus doctor' (p. 225). But whether this meant actual instruction, as Hāring assumed, or simply 'learned from' is uncertain. In any case, all these references to Hugh, including the use of the word *lectiones*, is in the dedicatory letter and prologue to Clarembald's commentary on Boethius' *De trinitate*, not on Boethius's *De hebdomadibus*, as Colish stated (*Peter Lombard*, I, 19). As for Lawrence of Westminster, he was not a secular student at Paris as Delhayé assumed ('L'Organisation scolaire au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Traditio*, 5 (1947), 211–68: 'tout séculier qu'il fût', p. 245), but a monk from England who served as a *reportator* for Hugh's lectures and, like Lombard, received patronage support from Bernard of Clairvaux; F. E. Croydon, 'Abbot Laurence of Westminster and Hugh of St. Victor', *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies*, 2 (1950), 169–71, and Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 19–20. In later years Lawrence wrote to St Victor on behalf of others who wished to study there. All these examples may be cases in which the Abbot of St Victor provided support and an opportunity for study to a limited number of persons recommended to him, as was the case with Lombard and as did Stephen of Tournai (not Simon of Tournai, as stated by Colish, 'Teaching and Learning', p. 112), who as Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève (1176–92) agreed to provide support and instruction for a nephew of the Archbishop of Lund (Delhayé, 'L'Organisation scolaire', p. 245). Evidence that St Victor operated a public school open to secular students is lacking. The principal connection between St Victor and Parisian students was through the care of souls; J. Longère, 'La Fonction pastorale de Saint-Victor à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> et au début du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *L'Abbaye parisienne de Saint-Victor au moyen âge*, ed. by J. Longère (Paris: Brepols, 1991), pp. 291–313; M. Crossnoe, '*Animarum lucra quærentes*: The School of St. Victor and the University of Paris in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1996).

<sup>39</sup> Stephen C. Ferruolo, *Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and their Critics, 1100–1215* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp. 22, 42, 148, implies that Alberic and Robert of Melun 'succeeded' Abelard in 1137, as if it were a matter of a teaching position at a specific school. The location of Abelard's place of teaching is usually described as 'in the cloister', understood as the monastery (Delhayé, 'L'Organisation', p. 256, citing Alexander, *Vita B. Gosvini*, bk I, in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, 24 vols (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1738–1904), XIV, 442: 'Tunc temporis magister Petrus Abelardus [...] in clauastro sancte Genovefe schola publica utebatur'). But the phrase 'in clauastro sancte Genovefe' more likely refers to the

and Robert of Melun taught on the Mont-Sainte-Geneviève simultaneously and independently. Each had his own private place of teaching, probably in rented quarters. None of the schools mentioned above was directly connected with any of these religious institutions.

Fourthly, the period of Parisian intellectual history to which these labels seem to refer (whether or not they were invented and used at that time) would appear to be from around 1135 to around 1170. Before 1135 it would have been premature to talk about a school made up of disciples of Gilbert of Poitiers, Master Alberic, or Petrus Helias. Moreover, it is not at all clear that later references to these schools are references to succeeding generations of disciples.<sup>40</sup> It is more likely that when these labels actually begin to appear with frequency in the texts, namely in the second half of the twelfth century and the opening years of the thirteenth, they are not references to active contemporary schools but are tags for certain stock ideas that date back to Parisian teaching a generation or two earlier. The individual competitiveness and academic aggressiveness that Abelard waged against William of Champeaux seems to have become group competitiveness in the second and third quarters of the twelfth century.<sup>41</sup> Some of that atmosphere is already suggested by Abelard's description of his experience among the pupils of Anselm of Laon. Masters of reputation, however, create discipleship while they are teaching. When we find labels appropriate to one generation being used several generations later, the context of reference is probably the earlier, not the later generation. The gap in time between the appearance of these labels (1160–1220) and the 'historical' reality to which they refer (1135–80) suggests that their primary function was their use in the structure of later scholastic debate, not as a description of the opinions of a contemporary group, nor as a history of philosophy.

The frequency of school labels in late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Paris may be tied to another development. School names are not limited to treatises and commentaries in logic and grammar. In theology one finds references to the 'Montani' or to the 'Nominales', to the followers of Gilbert of Poitiers or of

street or close of private houses adjacent to the monastery (rue du Cloître de Ste-Geneviève), as does the Cloître St-Benoît (a street now covered by the Sorbonne), or the Cloître Ste-Opportune in which Robert Grosseteste later owned a house; see N. M. Schulman, 'Husband, Father, Bishop? Grosseteste in Paris', *Speculum*, 72 (1997), 330–46 (pp. 334–36).

<sup>40</sup> This mistaken assumption was made by Franz Pelster in 'Nominales und Reales im 13. Jahrhundert', *Sophia*, 12–14 (1944–46), 154–61.

<sup>41</sup> One senses this already in the student reports of the conflicting opinions between Master P. [Abelard] and Master A [lberic de Monte]; see de Rijk, 'Some New Evidence'.

Peter Lombard, and to heretical groups, such as the ‘Petrobrusiani’, ‘Albigenses’ or ‘Cathari’, ‘Patarini’, ‘Humiliati’, ‘Valdenses’, and ‘Almarici’ (i.e., disciples of Amaury de Bene).<sup>42</sup> Unlike these latter groups, the schools were not considered heretical, and their names were not employed pejoratively by opposing academic groups. But it is in the atmosphere of growing concern over heresy and heretical sects at the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth that more frequent use of school labels, such as ‘Porretani’ and ‘Nominales’, occur.<sup>43</sup>

It would be useful to know the principal teachings of each of these groups as well as the names of those who belonged to them. Lists of theses defended by a particular school have survived from the late twelfth century and the opening years of the thirteenth.<sup>44</sup> Sten Ebbesen has argued that the development of school theses, theorems, or *positiones* in the second half of the twelfth century, at least the philosophical theses that adherents of one school defended against the theses of other schools, was a product of reflections on the old logic (*ars vetus*), especially Aristotle’s *Categories*.<sup>45</sup> This in part explains an early thirteenth-century list of

<sup>42</sup> William of Auxerre reports the attack of Joachim of Fiore on Peter Lombard, which was rejected in favour of Lombard at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), as an attack on ‘Magister Petrus et sequaces’; Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 4, chap. 6 (I, 56).

<sup>43</sup> See the references to ‘Porretani’ and ‘Nominales’ in Eberhard (Evrard) of Bethune, *Contra Valdenses*, or *Antihæresis*, chap. 1, in *Maxima bibliotheca veterum patrum*, ed. by Margaritus de la Bigne, 27 vols (Lyon: Lugduni, 1677), XXIV, 1529; Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 5, chap. 2 (I, 70); tr. 7, chap. 1 (I, 110); tr. 7, chap. 1 (I, 115); tr. 9, chap. 2 (I, 181). The same holds true for Walter of St Victor’s critique of the schools, specifically a critique of the teachings of Abelard, Gilbert of Poitiers, Peter Lombard, and Peter of Poitiers (‘Incipit [liber] secundus catholicorum contra eosdem hæreticos’) written around 1180 under the title *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciæ*, ed. by B. Geyer, in *Die Sententiae divinitatis, ein Sentenzenbuch der Gilbertschen Schule*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, 7.2–3 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1909), pp. 173\*–99\*; Palémon Glorieux, ‘Mauvais action et mauvais travail: Le “Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciæ”’, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 21 (1954), 179–93. On Evrard of Bethune see Christine Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdésisme en Languedoc* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966). On the internal and external critiques of the schools, see Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University*.

<sup>44</sup> For example, *Secta Meludina* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 174, fol. 95, ed. in de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 283–84; *Compendium logicae Porretanum*, *CIMAGL*, 46 (1983), ix, 1–2, 12–13, 30–31, 62–63; *Positiones Nominalium* in ‘Two Nominalist Texts’, *CIMAGL*, 61 (1991), 429–40 (p. 431). For a list of references to the positions of the various schools, see Iwakuma and Ebbesen, ‘Logico-Theological Schools from the Second Half of the 12th Century: A List of Sources’, *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 173–210.

<sup>45</sup> S. Ebbesen, ‘What Must One Have an Opinion About’, *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 62–79; Ebbesen, ‘A Porretanean Commentary on Aristotle’s *Categories*’, *CIMAGL*, 72 (2001), 35–88.

*positiones* on universals compiled by a 'Nominalis', even though earlier theses linked to the 'Nominales' were not connected to that philosophical issue.<sup>46</sup> The importance of the rich soil of grammatical theory, as exploited through glosses on Priscian, for the development of schools in the twelfth century should not be ignored.<sup>47</sup>

Considerable effort has also gone into tracing the influence and identifying the disciples of Abelard and Gilbert, and the teaching of the 'Nominales' (usually assumed to be the disciples of Abelard).<sup>48</sup> Yet the School of Peter Abelard and the

<sup>46</sup> Initially edited by Pelster, 'Nominales und Reales', and dated to the late thirteenth century, but re-edited by Ebbesen, 'Two Nominalist Texts', and dated to the opening years of the thirteenth century. On the original positions associated with the 'Nominales', see the discussion and literature cited in William J. Courtenay, 'Nominales and Nominalism in the Twelfth Century', in *Lectionum varietates: Hommage à Paul Vignaux (1904–1987)*, ed. by J. Jolivet, Z. Kaluza, and A. De Libera (Paris: Vrin, 1991), pp. 11–48; and C. Normore, 'Abelard and the School of the Nominales', *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 80–96.

<sup>47</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*; K. M. Fredborg and C. H. Kneepkens, 'Grammatica Porretana', *CIMAGL*, 57 (1988), 11–67; Fredborg, 'Promisimus'.

<sup>48</sup> On the School of Abelard see Arthur Landgraf, *Écrits théologiques de l'école d'Abélard* (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense, 1934); David E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard's Thought in the Early Scholastic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); K. Jacobi, C. Strub, and P. King, 'From *intellectus verus/falsus* to the *dictum propositionis*: The Semantics of Peter Abelard and his Circle', *Vivarium*, 34 (1996), 15–40; I. Rosier-Catach, 'Abélard et les grammairiens: Sur le verbe substantif et la prédication', *Vivarium*, 41 (2003), 175–248. On the 'Porretani' see Geyer, *Die Sententiae divinitatis*; A. Landgraf, 'Der Porretanismus der Homilien des Radulphus Ardens', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 64 (1940); Landgraf, *Commentarius Porretanus in primam epistolam ad Corinthios*, *Studii e testi*, 117 (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1945); Landgraf, *Dogmengeschichte der Früh-scholastik*, 4 vols in 8 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1952–56), which includes under this label Stephen of Tournai, the Bamberg *Summa*, and other authors and works from the late twelfth and early thirteenth century; A. Hayen, 'Le Concile de Reims et l'erreur théologique de Gilbert de la Porrée', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* (subsequently cited as *AHDLMA*), 10–11 (1935–36), 29–102 (pp. 34–35), who lists among the disciples of Gilbert: John of Salisbury, Otto von Freising, Raoul Ardent, John Beleth, Ivo of Chartres, Jordan Fantasme, Nicholas of Amiens, Stephen of Alinerra, Hugh de la Rochefoucauld, Adhemar of Saint-Ruf, and several anonymous authors and works. To that list Everard of Ypres, Simon of Tournai, Hugh of Honau, and Hugh Etherien have been added; N. Häring, 'The Porretans and the Greek Fathers', *Mediaeval Studies*, 24 (1962), 181–209; Häring, 'The *Liber de differentia naturae et personae* by Hugh Etherien and the Letters addressed to him by Peter of Vienna and Hugh of Honau', *Mediaeval Studies*, 24 (1962), 1–34; Häring, 'The *Liber de diversitate naturae et personae* by Hugh of Honau', *AHDLMA*, 29 (1962), 103–216; Häring, 'The *Tractatus de trinitate* of Adhemar of Saint-Ruf', *AHDLMA*, 31 (1964), 111–206. On some of the latter see Antoine Dondaine, *Écrits de la 'petite*

‘major’ and ‘lesser’ Porretanian schools, at least in the area of theology, remain largely historical reconstructions. Moreover, the results of this research are not always satisfactory, since historians have often fused the categories of ‘studied under’ and ‘disciple of’. Intellectual opposition can sometimes emerge from the master-pupil relationship, as in the case of William of Champeaux and Abelard, and one can be persuasively influenced by the written or reported opinions of someone one has never met. The pattern of study under many masters makes the master-pupil relationship almost useless in tracing intellectual affiliation, even while it provides us with important clues about the positive and negative influences in someone’s intellectual development. School affiliation, to the degree it can be identified, has to be based on self-identification, a shared body of doctrine unique to one tradition, or frequent labelling by contemporaries and later generations. But these methods are not without their dangers. Self-identification, like identification by contemporaries, can mean agreement on a particular point and need not imply agreement on other issues. A shared body of doctrine is a safer guide, but isolating sources and direct influence is not an easy matter.

The Porretani pose something of a special problem, since the succession of disciples of Gilbert of Poitiers is thought to last into the opening decades of the thirteenth century, a remarkable longevity if true. The *Promisimus* gloss on Priscian, which contains several references to the ‘Porretani’ on matters of logic and grammar, is one of the earliest references to that group.<sup>49</sup> In the closing years of the twelfth century, Peter Cantor and a contemporary author (Magister W.) refer to the disciples of Gilbert as the ‘Gilebertini’.<sup>50</sup> After 1200 there are numerous references to the ‘Porretani’ on theological questions, particularly on the Trinity

*école’ porrétaïne* (Montréal: Vrin, 1962); Fredborg and Kneepkens, ‘Grammatica Porretana’; Ebbesen, ‘Porretanean Commentary’; Ebbesen, ‘Porretaneans on Propositions’, in *Medieval Theories on Assertive and Non-Assertive Language*, ed. by A. Maierù and L. Valente (Florence: Olschki, 2004), pp. 129–39; L. Valente, “‘Virtus significationis, violentia usus’: Porretan Views on Theological Hermeneutics”, in *Medieval Theories*, pp. 163–84. On both groups, see *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains: Aux origines de la ‘Logica modernorum’*, ed. by J. Jolivet and A. de Libera (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1987).

<sup>49</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, pp. 89–90.

<sup>50</sup> Peter Cantor, *Summa de sacramentis et animae consiliis*, ed. by J. A. Dugauquier, *Analecta mediaevalia Namurcensia*, 21 (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1967), III.2b, p. 553. The reference to the Gilebertini in the *Quaestiones* of ‘W’ is cited in a note in Cantor, *Summa*, III.1, p. 317. Godfrey of St Victor, *Fons philosophiae*, p. 44, uses the label ‘Porri’; see also Luisa Valente, *Phantasia contrarietatis: Contraddizioni scritturali, discorso teologico e arti del linguaggio nel ‘De tropis loquendi’ di Pietro Cantore († 1197)* (Florence: Olschki, 1997), pp. 97–104.

and on the efficacy of prayers for the dead.<sup>51</sup> By the time we reach the references to the 'Porretani' in the writings of Albertus Magnus or Thomas Aquinas, they are only 'tagged' opinions dating back several generations, and it is unlikely if these later authors could have identified the 'Porretani' beyond knowing the name and perhaps the writings of Gilbert.<sup>52</sup>

One must be cautious in establishing the content of teaching among these individual schools, or in identifying those who belonged to them, apart from the 'founding' master. School labels were rarely used for self-identification. One does encounter discipleship, strong allegiance to a particular master, and references to 'our master' or 'our philosopher' or 'our doctrine', as in the *Introductiones Montane minores* (c. 1130) or the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* (late twelfth century).<sup>53</sup> Although the phrase *nos dicimus* may not reflect a group mentality but be simply the academic 'we', like the royal or papal 'we', such phrases as *magister noster* in the twelfth century (in contrast to the late Middle Ages) do express a current or former master-pupil relationship. But even here we must proceed cautiously. The phrase 'our master' need not imply doctrinal allegiance or a large group of faithful disciples. Abelard's references to William of Champeaux as *magister noster* meant only academic (and often hostile) filiation, not discipleship. Moreover, in the treatises just mentioned, the labels 'Albricani', 'Montani', 'Gilbertini', or 'Porretani' do not appear. There is a defence of the doctrines of the 'Melidunenses' that opens with the words '*secta Meludina*', but it does not use the first person singular or plural.<sup>54</sup> The point may seem minor, but apart

<sup>51</sup> For example, see Prepositinus, *Quaestiones*, q. 111, as cited in Georges Lacombe, *La Vie et les oeuvres de Prévostin* (Kain: Le Saulchoir, 1927), p. 55; Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 5, chap. 2 (I, 70) and tr. 7, chap. 1 (I, 110). But since all these references are to opinions Gilbert held and one of them is a direct quotation from Gilbert's commentary on Boethius's *De trinitate*, we may be faced here with a group name for one person's opinion.

<sup>52</sup> Albertus Magnus, *Sent.*, IV, d. 46, a. 2, in *Opera omnia*, ed. by Augusti Borgnet, 38 vols (Paris: Vivès, 1890–99), XXX, 630. Thomas mentions the 'Porretani' four times in Book I of his *Scriptum super libros sententiarum* and once in Book IV (d. 45, q. 1, a. 2). They are also referred to in Thomas's *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 28, a. 2; *Compendium theologiae*, I, chap. 67; and in his disputed questions *De potentia* and *De veritate*. In most if not all of these cases Thomas is only referring to the Porretanian position on a certain issue, and to the degree that he has anyone specifically in mind, it is Gilbert.

<sup>53</sup> For the references in the *Introductiones*, see de Rijk, 'Some New Evidence'; for those in the *Compendium* see CIMAGL, 46 (1938). Both the *Compendium logicae Porretanum* and the *Secta Meludina* mention disagreement, or at least diversity of opinion ('quidam nostrorum' or 'quidam suorum') within the group; CIMAGL, 46 (1983), ix and 36.

<sup>54</sup> For literature on the text of *Secta Meludina*, see above, n. 25.

from the texts cited above (n. 44), twelfth- and early thirteenth-century authors rarely identified themselves as a 'Montanus', a 'Melidunus', a 'Parvipontanus', or a 'Porretanus', save occasionally on a particular point of doctrine.<sup>55</sup> The process of linking known authors and treatises to these schools is often a product of modern scholarship on the basis of compatibility of content (i.e., positions maintained) or strong dependence upon an earlier master or one of his works. Those connections in many cases undoubtedly existed, but that discovery or identification often occurred in the twentieth century, not the twelfth.<sup>56</sup> School-labelled positions in the twelfth century were for the most part applied by those who did not belong to the 'schools' so mentioned. Although they are clues, they cannot be trusted as an infallible guide to what a group believed.

Other factors make the identification of group teaching difficult. Individual opinion was sometimes disguised as a group position, and a group name may be used to label ideas that belong to no particular person or group. Peter the Venerable's *Contra Petrobrusianos* is really a refutation of the teachings of Peter of Bruys,<sup>57</sup> and some of the references to the 'Porretani' may simply be references to the writings of Gilbert of Poitiers.<sup>58</sup> It may well be that these writers were using a group name when they had one specific author in mind, just as the scholastic 'some say' (*quidem dicunt*) or 'others say' (*alii dicunt*) are often references to one writer's opinion or occasionally straw men used to create context and the appearance of scholastic debate.

Furthermore, we should not combine all references to a group into a consistent picture of 'their teaching'. A label used in the area of logic and grammar may have a different meaning or refer to a different group when used in a theological text.<sup>59</sup> Positions were rarely the exclusive property of one school. Opposition on

<sup>55</sup> In the early thirteenth century Evrard of Bethune identified himself with the 'Porretani' on the question of the object of faith (see below, n. 105), and Peter of Capua sided with the 'Nominales' ('nos Nominales') on at least one issue; see A. Landgraf, 'Studien zur Theologie des zwölften Jahrhunderts', *Traditio*, 1 (1943), 183–210 (pp. 189, 202); William J. Courtenay, 'Peter of Capua as a Nominalist', *Vivarium*, 30 (1992), 157–72.

<sup>56</sup> To avoid confusion de Rijk, following Landgraf and other scholars, chose to label anonymous texts by the place where the manuscript is presently located instead of conjecturing a twelfth-century school from which each supposedly derives.

<sup>57</sup> Peter the Venerable, *Contra Petrobrusianos hereticos*, ed. by J. Fearn, CCCM, 10 (1968).

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea*, I, tr. 5, chap. 2 (I, 70); tr. 7, chap. 1 (I, 110).

<sup>59</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, pp. 55, 89, believed that references to the opinions of the 'Montani' and 'Porretani' in logical and theological texts refer to the same groups.

one issue was often balanced by agreement on others. Consequently, there is no possibility of neatly dividing groups according to opposing ideologies.

In order to understand better the meaning of 'Albricani' and 'Montani', and the relationship between Abelard and the 'Nominales', it is necessary to look more closely at the identity of Master Alberic and the origin of the Nominalists. Most of what has been written about twelfth-century nominalism has been based on the assumption (rooted in the late fifteenth-century controversy between 'Nominales' and 'Reales' and in the subsequent history of philosophy) that nominalism is a logic of terms, not things, and is more specifically a position on the problem of universals that denies their existence in things (*in rebus*), either separately or as inhering in individuals.<sup>60</sup> Thus twelfth-century defenders of the thesis that universal concepts (genera and species) were not *in rebus* but in voiced sounds (*in vocibus*) or in words (*in sermonibus*), such as Roscelin and Abelard, were Nominalists. Joseph Reiners, in his influential study of nominalism in 1910, pointed out that the earliest reference to the 'Nominales' occurs in the *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury, completed in 1159, and that the chief opponent of the *secta Nominalium* mentioned there was Alberic, who some have identified with the chief opponent of Abelard in the *Historia calamitatum* and elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> Therefore

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Reiners, *Der Nominalismus in der Frühscholastik: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Universalienfrage im Mittelalter*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, 8.5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1910). For examples of the normal philosophical meaning of 'Nominalism' see: Meyrick H. Carré, *Realists and Nominalists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946); Henry Veatch, *Realism and Nominalism Revisited* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1954); Richard I. Aaron, *The Theory of Universals*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967); *Das Universalien-Problem*, ed. by W. Stegmüller, Wege der Forschung, 83 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978). On the influence of the fifteenth-century *Wegestreit* on the meaning of 'Nominalism', see: Lynn Thorndike, *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944; repr. 1971), pp. 355–60; Franz Ehrle, *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1925); Gilbert, 'Ockham, Wyclif, and the "Via Moderna"'.

<sup>61</sup> Reiners, *Der Nominalismus*, pp. 10–12, 56–59, whose assessment was adopted by Paul Vignaux, 'Nominalisme', in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 16 vols (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1923–72), XI, pt 1, cols 717–84. The text in question comes from John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10, ed. by C. C. I. Webb (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 78: 'Alberico, qui inter ceteros opinatissimus dialecticus enitebat, et erat revera Nominalis sectae acerrimus impugnator.' See references to Alberic (of Reims) in Abelard, *Historia calamitatum* (Ep. 1), chaps 4 and 9, in PL, CLXXVIII, cols 125, 144–47; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epist.*, 13/14 (to Pope Honorius in 1126) supporting Alberic's nomination to the bishopric of Châlons (PL, CLXXXII, 116–17); John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, I, chap. 5 (p. 18); John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis*, chap. 8, ed. and trans. by Marjorie Chibnall (London: Nelson, 1956), p. 19.

nominalism supposedly referred originally and primarily to the thought of Abelard, who had taught logic and universals to be in word (*in sermone*) or in name (*in nomine*), not Roscelin (who said that concepts were *in voce*), and that the *secta Nominalium* was the school of Abelard.

But just as twelfth-century scholarship had long been hindered by the facile assumption that references to Master Bernard, Bernard of Chartres, and Master 'B' were all references to the same person — an unwarranted and dangerous assumption unveiled by Southern — so too our understanding of twelfth-century nominalism has been hindered by the assumption that all references to Master Alberic are to the same person, namely Alberic of Reims. That confusion was corrected as early as 1940 but has still not been widely or fully appreciated.<sup>62</sup> There were, in fact, several Alberics in the schools of northern France in the second and third quarters of the twelfth century, and the opponent of Abelard at the Council of Soissons is not the same as the 'impugnator sectae Nominalium'.<sup>63</sup>

The earlier and best-known 'Alberic' was Alberic of Reims, whose life and activity can be documented from Abelard's *Historia calamitatum* and from other sources of the period. He was an almost exact contemporary of Abelard, or slightly older. He was born around 1077 probably in or near Reims, studied dialectic under William of Champeaux at Paris (before 1108 when William left his position as teacher of logic at the cathedral school, and probably before Abelard's arrival around 1104, since Abelard does not say they sat together under William,

<sup>62</sup> Lesne, *Les Écoles*, p. 212, and Grabmann, 'Aristoteles im zwölften Jahrhundert', *Mediaeval Studies*, 12 (1950), 123–62 (repr. in *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, 3 vols (Munich: Hueber, 1956), III, 64–127 (p. 103)), were among the first to distinguish the two Alberics. The identity of Alberic of Paris (or Alberic de Monte) is clearly recognized in the work of de Rijk, Luscombe, Southern, Ferruolo, G. Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1973), and Tweedale, *Abailard on universals* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1976). The assumption of one opponent of Abelard by the name of Alberic, however, lives on; see, for example, *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, trans. by B. Radice (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), p. 26; John Baldwin, 'Masters at Paris from 1179 to 1215', in *Renaissance and Renewal* (see n. 3, above), pp. 160–61; and Christopher J. Martin, 'The Compendium logicae Porretanum: A Survey of Philosophical Logic from the School of Gilbert of Poitiers', *CIMAGL*, 46 (1983), xviii–xlvi (p. xxxv). Daniel McGarry, *The 'Metalogicon' of John of Salisbury* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955), p. 95, suspected that there were two Alberics (as did John R. Williams, 'The Cathedral School of Reims in the Time of Master Alberic, 1118–1136', *Traditio*, 20 (1964), 93–114 (p. 103)) but assumed that both were called Alberic of Reims. In any event, even among the well informed, the implications of that separation for the history of twelfth-century nominalism have gone unremarked.

<sup>63</sup> In addition to the two Master Alberics discussed here, there was Alberic, Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève in 1165, and the chronicler, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines.

which he did in other cases), and studied theology under Anselm of Laon.<sup>64</sup> Alberic was already a leading pupil of Anselm at Laon when Abelard arrived there to study in 1112 or 1113.<sup>65</sup> By 1118 Alberic had returned to Reims presumably to teach.<sup>66</sup> Abelard indicates that in 1121 Alberic was conducting a school at Reims, presumably in theology, as was a fellow pupil from the classroom of Anselm of Laon, Lotulf the Lombard, from Novara.<sup>67</sup> There is no indication that this Alberic taught anywhere other than at Reims.

Alberic of Reims was a major instigator of the proceedings against Abelard at the Council of Soissons in 1121.<sup>68</sup> Everything we know about his teaching suggests that he favoured explicating texts and doctrines by quotations from scriptural and patristic authority (similar to Anselm of Laon's method) rather than by rational investigation based on the principles of grammar and logic. It also appears that his animosity toward Abelard was personal, that it dated from their experience together at Laon, and that Alberic had difficulty in finding and proving errors in Abelard's work on the Trinity beyond his objection to Abelard's use of grammatical and logical analysis.

Although Abelard saw Alberic's ambition in terms of the schools — to become a leading master of his day after the deaths of Anselm of Laon (1117) and William of Champeaux (1121) — Alberic was already beginning to look beyond the schools.<sup>69</sup> He was the leading (but ultimately unsuccessful) candidate for the vacant see of Châlons-sur-Marne in 1126.<sup>70</sup> Sometime between 1127 and 1131

<sup>64</sup> For the biography of Alberic of Reims, see A. Hofmeister, 'Studien über Otto von Freising', *Neues Archiv*, 37 (1912), 130–34, and Williams, 'Cathedral School of Reims'. My date for the birth of Alberic of Reims is conjectured from the known dates of his career and departs from Williams, who places it between 1085 and 1090. Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 9, mentions that both Alberic and Lotulf had had the same masters as himself, namely William of Champeaux and Anselm of Laon. The type and quality of Alberic's teaching at Reims is described in the metrical biography of Adelbert of Saarbrücken, in a poem of Hugh Primus of Orléans, and in the *Vita* of Abbot Hugh of Marchiennes, who studied under Alberic at Reims shortly after 1120; for the references to these sources see Williams, 'Cathedral School of Reims', pp. 97–99.

<sup>65</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 4.

<sup>66</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, in PL, CLXIII, col. 1425, and Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, MS 1650, n. 9, cited in Williams, 'Cathedral School of Reims', p. 96.

<sup>67</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 9.

<sup>68</sup> On Alberic's role at the Council of Soissons, see Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 9.

<sup>69</sup> Abelard, *Historia calamitatum*, chap. 9.

<sup>70</sup> The bishopric of Châlons, which William of Champeaux had occupied from 1113 to 1121, had remained vacant from the death of Ebalus of Roucy (21 June 1126) into 1127; P. B. Gams,

Alberic was made archdeacon of Reims, a position that did not prevent his continuing to teach.<sup>71</sup> His final advancement came in 1137, when he was made archbishop of Bourges, a position which he held until his death in 1141.<sup>72</sup> He is consistently referred to as Alberic of Reims.

Our other Alberic is Master Alberic, who is less well documented but sufficiently so in order to distinguish him from Alberic of Reims. He is far more important for twelfth-century logic and for the identification of the 'Nominales'. John of Salisbury tells us that after studying dialectic under Abelard on the Mont-Sainte-Geneviève for a year (1136–37), the departure of Abelard caused him to continue his studies the following year (1137–38) under another master 'on the Mont', namely master Alberic.<sup>73</sup> This Alberic is clearly not Alberic of Reims, who was already Archbishop of Bourges, and whom John of Salisbury mentioned earlier in the *Metalogicon* along with others of Abelard's generation, William of Champeaux and Simon of Paris.<sup>74</sup> And it is this second Alberic whom John of Salisbury describes as 'a most penetrating opponent of the Nominalist sect'. There is little ground for Reiner's assumption that John was implying that the leader of the *secta Nominalium* was the aforementioned master, namely Abelard. John did not make a shift in ideological affiliation. He was a beginning student in 'the elementary principles' of logic. He was very much impressed by Abelard and was upset by Abelard's departure, which left him and presumably many other students without a master. So John chose the next best dialectician available in his immediate area on the Mont south of Paris proper (the Ile-de-la-Cité), Master Alberic, who had the additional reputation of being a perceptive or clever opponent of the Nominalists.

In contrast to the non-analytical methods of Alberic of Reims, whose dull-wittedness John chose not to defend against Alberic's attackers, Master Alberic of Paris (or Alberic de Monte) was extremely subtle and analytical in his approach

*Series episcoporum ecclesiae catholicae* (Regensburg: Manz, 1873), p. 534. Bernard of Clairvaux gave his support to the candidacy of Alberic, who had apparently been elected by the chapter, but without success.

<sup>71</sup> Williams, 'Cathedral School of Reims', p. 96.

<sup>72</sup> Gams, *Series episcoporum*, p. 523.

<sup>73</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 78): 'Deinde, post discessum eius, qui mihi praepreperus visus est, adhaesi Magistro Alberico, qui inter caeteros opinatissimus dialecticus enitebat'. It was under this Master Alberic as well as Gilbert of Poitiers that Hugh Eterianus studied. For more on this Alberic see Grabmann, *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, III, 103–09, and Williams, 'Cathedral School at Reims', pp. 103–04.

<sup>74</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon* I, chap. 5 (pp. 17–18).

to texts, finding questions everywhere.<sup>75</sup> John thought both Alberic and Robert of Melun (under whom he also studied logic at this time) 'had keen minds and were diligent scholars'.<sup>76</sup>

Soon after 1138 Alberic left Paris for Bologna. Whether or not he was engaged in the study of Roman law, it was probably in Italy that he came in contact with James of Venice's (Jacobus Veneticus Graecus) commentary on Aristotle's *Sophistici elenchi* and, either there or subsequently at Paris, composed his own commentary on that work.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps access to such previously unknown works in Aristotle's *Organon* (those that make up what comes to be known as the *logica nova*) explains the changes in his treatment of logic when he subsequently returned to teaching dialectic on Mont-Sainte-Geneviève.<sup>78</sup> He may have been among those with whom John of Salisbury renewed his acquaintance at Paris in 1148.<sup>79</sup> The date for Master Alberic's death is unknown. It is likely that he lived into the 1170s, since of him Godfrey of St Victor, in a work completed or at least dedicated after 1176, remarked: 'although Death is greedy to make man's life his plunder, Death's too slow this one from his crazy ways to sunder.'<sup>80</sup>

The relationship of Abelard, Alberic, and Robert of Melun is complex, as is the meaning of 'Montani' and 'Melidunenses'. De Rijk suggested that the latter two names were based on place of teaching, although they became linked to disciples of the principal representatives of those schools. According to de Rijk, Robert's cognomen as well as his connection with Abelard and Alberic originated at Melun, where Abelard presumably resumed his teaching of logic around 1132–35 and where his pupils, Alberic and Robert, presumably began their teach-

<sup>75</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 79): 'quorum alter [Alberic], ad omnia scrupulosus, locum quaestionis inveniebat ubique, ut quamvis polita planities offendiculo non careret et, ut aiunt, ei cirpus non esset enodis. Nam et ibi monstrabat quid oporteat enodari.'

<sup>76</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 79).

<sup>77</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, I, 82–88.

<sup>78</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 79): 'Nam postea unus eorum, profectus Bononiam, dedit quod docuerat; siquidem et reversus dedocuit. An melius, iudicent qui eum ante et postea audierunt.' John does not precisely say that it was Alberic who went to Bologna, but since the other of the two became proficient in theology ('in divinis proficiens litteris'), everyone has assumed the latter to mean Robert of Melun and the former Alberic. De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, I, 85–88, conjectures that Alberic left Paris by 1142 and did not return before 1146.

<sup>79</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 82).

<sup>80</sup> Godfrey of St Victor, *Fons philosophiae*, p. 44: 'Sed quia velociter transit homo vanus, Etiam dum moritur maneat insanus'; trans. by E. A. Synan, *The Fountain of Philosophy* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1972), p. 49.

ing careers.<sup>81</sup> Abelard's brief return to Paris (c. 1135–37) was followed in 1137 by Alberic and Robert establishing themselves on the Mont. The 'Melidunenses' were (or became) a Parisian group who followed the traditions from the Melun period of this triumvirate (c. 1132–37), while the 'Montani' resulted from their teaching on Mont-Sainte-Geneviève in the period after 1137.

There is no doubt that Robert, who was English by birth and whose main teaching career was in Paris, was for a time associated with Melun. But the other features of this story are conjectural. There is no evidence that either Abelard or Alberic taught at Melun in the 1130s. The suggestion that Abelard was waiting for a chair to open up back in Paris,<sup>82</sup> or that Alberic and Robert succeeded Abelard in the school on Mont-Sainte-Geneviève, is based on a misunderstanding of the academic structure of that period. There is no reason to suppose that Abelard resumed his teaching on the Mont in the very year John of Salisbury went there to study, or that Alberic succeeded Abelard. The frequently contrasted positions of Abelard and Alberic, referred to in the *Introductiones Montane minores*, suggest that they were teaching at the same time and place, probably in the 1132–37 period. Moreover, Abelard and Alberic were not particularly associated with Melun. The passage in John of Salisbury's *Entheticus* (c. 1155) only states that an adherent of the 'Melidunenses' tried to be more learned than Alberic and more accurate or orthodox than Abelard.<sup>83</sup> It does not identify Alberic or Abelard as 'Melidunenses'. We may never know the circumstances behind Robert's cognomen, but his teaching is sufficient origin for the 'Melidunenses', or 'Robertini'.

We should not assume that Alberic and Robert of Melun formed one school or shared a common doctrine. The fact that John of Salisbury studied under both at the same time does not link them. Simultaneous study under two masters was not unusual. If Robert of Melun was in fact the master of the 'Robertini' referred to by Godfrey of St Victor, Godfrey distinguishes them from Alberic's group. And what we know of the teaching of Robert, albeit mostly theological, does not parallel the references to the teaching of the 'Montani'.

<sup>81</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 282–89.

<sup>82</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 287: 'to obtain once again a chair in one of the Parisian schools'.

<sup>83</sup> John of Salisbury, *Entheticus de dogmate philosophorum* (PL, CXCIX, col. 966): 'Iste loquax dicaxque parum redolet Melidunum. Creditur Alberico doctior iste suo. Corrigit errores verbosus hic Abelardi.' For a discussion of this, see Lesne, *Les Écoles*, p. 212, and de Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 288. One need not, however, infer from this passage, as did de Rijk, that 'the School of Melun [...] was at the same time, in John's eyes, that of Abailard and Alberic'.

In the recovered portion of William of Tyre's *Historia* that details his education, he mentions eight masters of grammar and logic under whom he studied, undoubtedly at Paris.<sup>84</sup> Among these were Petrus Helias, Adam Parviponanus, Robert of Melun, and Alberic de Monte. Robert, as John of Salisbury informs us, bore the cognomen 'Meludensis' as a 'school name' ('ut cognomine designetur quod meruit in scholarum regimine').<sup>85</sup> Southern is probably correct, therefore, in identifying the 'Melidunenses' as Parisian pupils of Robert of Melun, not students of some master at Melun, where Abelard also taught for a time. The occasional similarity between positions attributed to the 'Melidunenses' and Abelard is not sufficient counterevidence, since Robert was a student of Abelard and probably continued to share some common teachings throughout his career. Similarly, most scholars, including de Rijk, view the 'Parvipontani' as disciples of Adam. We have already mentioned references to the 'Helistae'. It is likely, therefore, that 'de Monte' was a cognomen that Alberic earned in the schools and that, parallel to these other masters, the 'Montani' were disciples of Master Alberic de Monte.

The use of two names to refer to the same group is less of a problem than it might seem. Some groups of disciples, perhaps many, appear to have been identified by the first name of the master as well as his cognomen. The 'Porretani' were sometimes referred to as the 'Gilbertini'.<sup>86</sup> Similarly, it has long been supposed that 'Melidunenses' and 'Robertini' both refer to disciples of Robert of Melun, just as the 'Adamitae' was another name for the 'Parvipotani'. It is probable, therefore, that 'Montani' and 'Albricani' are two names for the disciples of Alberic de Monte, even though the labels 'Albricani' and 'Montani' occur in the same text, namely the *Promisimus* gloss.

One test for this problem, albeit imperfect, is to compare references to the positions of the 'Montani' with parallel passages in those treatises and commentaries that show a marked preference for the teaching of Alberic. Unfortunately, the results are not conclusive. The reference to the 'Montani' in the Eberbach manuscript is on a point of Christology that we would not expect to find in the logical treatises.<sup>87</sup> The position on a collective whole (*totum disgregativum* or a

<sup>84</sup> R. B. C. Huygens, 'Guillaume de Tyr étudiant: Un chapitre (XIX, 12) de son "Histoire" retrouvé', *Latomus*, 21 (1962), 811–29 (pp. 822–23); Southern, 'Schools of Paris', pp. 1320–33.

<sup>85</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10 (p. 78).

<sup>86</sup> Peter Cantor, *Summa de sacramentis*, III.1, p. 317; III.2b, p. 553. Peter refers to them on the problem of original sin, while Master W. cites them on the problem of the unity of God and the divine names.

<sup>87</sup> S. Ebbesen, Fredborg, and Nielsen, 'Compendium logicae Porretanum', pp. 38–39.

*totum contiguum*), which, according to the *Compendium logicae Porretanum*, were considered united entities by the ‘Montani’, does not appear in the various works that de Rijk has linked with the school of Alberic.<sup>88</sup> The teaching attributed to the ‘Montani’ in the *Promisimus* gloss, namely the refusal to consider demonstrative pronouns *nomina* or parts of speech, is, however, close to the teaching of Alberic, although it was probably not unique to him.<sup>89</sup>

The relation of Alberic de Monte and Abelard is a complex one. Alberic was among those who had studied under Abelard or, at the very least, had been influenced by him.<sup>90</sup> It was this Alberic who, along with other masters who were former students of Abelard (Valetus or Vasletus, Mainerius, and Garnerus Grammaticus), was individually credited with the authorship of a book written ‘in scolis Magistri P. Abailardi’.<sup>91</sup> It was also this Alberic who, sometime after 1125 and in the company of Garnerus, entered (enrolled within?) the schools of Master Gilbert of Poitiers, presumably when Gilbert was teaching at Paris.<sup>92</sup> The ‘Albricani’ referred to in the *Promisimus* gloss on Priscian on a point of logic were pupils of this Alberic, not Alberic of Reims. Having once been a pupil of Abelard does not, of course, rule out the possibility of Alberic’s opposition to some of Abelard’s teaching. In fact, the texts edited by de Rijk reveal many points of difference as well as some points of similarity.<sup>93</sup> In the eyes of Alberic’s students, the two masters were often in opposition. The question is whether among those points of opposition was the problem of universals and/or the understanding of *nomina*.

<sup>88</sup> S. Ebbesen, Fredborg, and Nielsen, ‘Compendium logicae Porretanum’, pp. 38–39.

<sup>89</sup> Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 89: ‘Nota quod dialectici sub nomine pronomina demonstrativa comprehendunt, relativa vero dicunt consignificare, nec sunt partes orationis; participium sub verbo, quia actionem vel passionem significant; adverbia quae sine respectu dicuntur ponunt sub nomine, ut “bene”, “male”, et similia. [...] Tamen Montani dicunt demonstrativa pronomina non esse partes orationis, quia ex demonstratione significant, sed hac ratione deberent dicere verba primae et secundae personae non esse partes orationis, quia demonstrationem habent.’ De Rijk, ‘Some New Evidence’, p. 10: ‘Et notandum quod secundum Albericum quidem oblique casus sunt nomina, et pronomina non sunt nomina, et omnia adverbium certae significationis sunt nomina, ut “bene”, “male”.’ Ibid., p. 11: ‘Sciendum vero quod secundum Albericum demonstrative vel relative orationes non sunt propositiones, sed nec negandum omnia participia esse verba.’

<sup>90</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 212; Luscombe, *School of Peter Abelard*, pp. 55–56.

<sup>91</sup> *Promisimus* gloss on Priscian (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud lat. 67, fol. 22<sup>ra</sup>), cited in Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 78; Fredborg, ‘Promisimus’, p. 99.

<sup>92</sup> *Promisimus*, fol. 48<sup>ra</sup>, cited in Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 80; Fredborg, ‘Promisimus’, p. 135.

<sup>93</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, I, 82–98, and ‘Some New Evidence’.

The size and complexity of the history of the term 'Nominales' require a separate study. It is sufficient here to state that the term did not originate in the context of the problem of universals (that universal concepts are *nomina*) or with a non-realist approach to logic (that terms, propositions, and logical operations do not refer directly to objects and states of affairs in external reality but to logical entities and the way language operates).<sup>94</sup> The label 'Nominales' originated with a theory of the noun. As Chenu demonstrated more than a half century ago on the basis of assembled references to 'Nominales' up to 1260 (and for which further supporting evidence has subsequently been uncovered), the *opinio Nominalium* was a grammatical thesis about the unity of the noun (*nomen*) that had philosophical implications for the problems of the object of knowledge and the meaning and truth value of tensed propositions, and had theological implications for the problems of divine knowledge, volition, and power.<sup>95</sup> Behind variations in grammatical form (the consignification of *voces*), each word has one meaning or signification. Just as number, gender, and case do not alter the meaning of nouns or adjectives, so voice, mood, and tense do not alter the meaning of a verb. *Albus*, *alba*, and *album* all mean 'white', and *currit*, *cucurrit*, and *curret* all mean 'run'. Tense is part of the consignification of a word and does not alter its signification, its identity of meaning (*identitas nominis*). *Nomina* are not equivocal, and diverse modes of signifying (*modi significandi*) do not affect the unity of the noun. Similarly, propositions (*enuntiabilia*) that use the same words but in different tenses are identical in meaning. Past, present, and future forms of the same proposition (*enuntiabile*) do not affect the unity of the *enuntiabile*.

The core of the teaching of the 'Nominales' (and thus their name) was that only the nominative case of nouns and the present tense of verbs signify. The oblique cases of nouns do not, strictly speaking, signify as *nomina*; they only consignify. Similarly, the tenses of verbs and related adverbs also consignify and do not affect the principal signification of the *nomen*. One of the distinguishing features of Alberic's teaching, according to the *Introductiones Montane minores*, was that words in the oblique cases as well as adverbs, because the latter category

<sup>94</sup> The traditional view that nominalism derived from the view that universals were *nomina* has been maintained in recent years by Yukio Iwakuma; see above, n. 18.

<sup>95</sup> M.-D. Chenu, 'Grammaire et théologie aux XII<sup>e</sup> et XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles', *AHDLMA*, 10–11 (1935–36), 5–28 (republished in an altered version in his *La Théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1957), pp. 90–107). See also Landgraf, 'Studien zur Theologie'; and more generally, S. Knuuttila, 'How Theological Problems Influenced the Development of Medieval Logic', in *Ad Ingenii Acutitionem: Studies in Honour of Alfonso Maierù*, ed. by S. Caroti and others (Louvain-la-Neuve: Collège Cardinal Mercier, 2006), pp. 183–98.

included such time-bearing words as ‘yesterday’ (*heri*) and ‘tomorrow’ (*cras*), were separate *nomina*.<sup>96</sup> Alberic rejected the notion that there was only one *nomen* behind all the grammatical inflections of a word. He rejected the idea that adverbs only consignify. It was on these points of grammar with their implications for logic — not on the ontological status of universal concepts — that Alberic was viewed by John of Salisbury as the great opponent of the *secta Nominalium*.

What was Abelard’s position on the theory of the unity of the noun and his relation to the *secta Nominalium*? Abelard shared with most grammarians of the early twelfth century the view that the nominative case of nouns and the present tense of verbs are primary and that the oblique cases and temporal adverbs consignify.<sup>97</sup> In this he was neither innovative nor unique. Abelard did go further and, in the area of theology, used the theory of the unity of the noun (‘many *voces*, one *nomen*’) to explain why the faith of Abraham and the other Patriarchs (the Messiah will come), of Peter (the Messiah is come), and later Christians (the Messiah has come) is one and the same faith. The oneness of the faith of the Patriarchs and Christians had been expressed several times by Augustine, noting that the change in tense does not change the content of faith, but Augustine did not connect it to a grammatical theory of the relation of signification and consignification, which Abelard did.<sup>98</sup>

Hugh of St Victor addresses the same issue in *De sacramentis*.<sup>99</sup> He does not cite Abelard by name, but he appears to have been familiar with Abelard’s position on the question. Because that position was grounded in Augustine, Hugh supports it, although throughout his discussion he wants to see something special in the faith of the apostles and later Christians, ‘that from the beginning through the succession of the times, faith has grown in the faithful themselves by certain increases’. Hugh concludes by saying that despite the different times, it is the

<sup>96</sup> See above, n. 78.

<sup>97</sup> Abelard, *Dialectica*, ed. by L. M. de Rijk (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1956), pp. xlii, l–li, 121–29, 111–15, 141, 165–66; William J. Courtenay, ‘On the Eve of Nominalism: Consignification in Anselm’, *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 3 (1993), 561–67.

<sup>98</sup> Augustine, *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus CXXIV*, ed. by Radbodus Willems, CCSL, 36 (1954), 45.9, pp. 392–93, and *Enarrationes in Psalmos I–L*, ed. by Eligius Dekkers and Johannes Fraipont, CCSL, 38 (1956), 50.17, p. 612: ‘Tempora variata sunt, non fides’; *De nuptiis et concupiscentia*, ed. by Carl F. Urban and Joseph Zycha, CSEL, 42 (1902), II.24, p. 277: ‘quia sicut credimus nos Christum in carne venisse, sic illi venturum, sicut nos mortuum, ita illi moriturum, sicut nos resurrexisse, ita ille resurrecturum, et nos vero et illi ad iudicium mortuorum vivorumque venturum’.

<sup>99</sup> Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis*, I, pt 10, chap. 6, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 335–39.

same faith, but not the same cognition of faith, the latter having changed and grown. Peter Lombard, who takes up the same question in his *Libri sententiarum*, follows Augustine (and Abelard), without repeating Hugh's reservations or reformulation.<sup>100</sup>

Lombard's willingness to follow Abelard rather than Hugh on this issue goes deeper. Abelard had used the theory of the unity of the noun as one explanation for the immutability of divine knowledge, volition, and power, according to the principle that what is once true, known, willed, or able to be done, is always so (*semel verum, semper verum*) — positions that would later be described as 'nominalist'.<sup>101</sup> The time of events *ad extra*, and the changes in tensed propositions do not limit or change what God knows, wills, and does. Hugh's treatment of these issues stayed close to Anselm.<sup>102</sup> The position of Abelard, developed in the 1130s, was adopted by Lombard in his solution to this same group of theological issues in his *Libri sententiarum* written in the 1150s, including the use of the formula *semel/semper*.<sup>103</sup>

Later in the twelfth century the many-*voces*-one-*nomen* theory and the distinction of signification and consignification was applied to the problem of the Trinity. Alain de Lille in his *Contra haereticos* explained the relation of one God and three persons through the one meaning behind the forms *albus*, *alba*, and *album*:

<sup>100</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, ed. by I. Brady, Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, 4–5, 2 vols (Grottaferrata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1971–81), III, d. 25, c. 1 (II, 152–54).

<sup>101</sup> Abelard, *Theologia 'Scolarium'*, III, chap. 5, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 1103A–1104A; *Opera theologica III*, ed. by Eligius M. Buytaert and Constant J. Mews, CCSL, 13 (1987), pp. 526–27.

<sup>102</sup> Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis*, I, pt 2, chaps 5–6, 10, 22.

<sup>103</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, I, d. 41, c. 3 (I, pt 2, 292): 'Praeterea considerari oportet utrum ea omnia quae semel scit vel praescit Deus, semper sciat et scierit, et praesciat ac praescierit, an olim scierit vel praescierit quod modo non scit vel praescit.' Ibid., p. 293: 'Scit enim Deus semper omnia quae aliquando scit: omnem enim scientiam quam aliquando habet, semper habuit et habet et habebit. [...] idem de nativitate huius hominis et mundi creatione nunc etiam scit, quod sciebat antequam fierent, licet tunc et nunc hanc scientiam eius diversis exprimi verbis oporteat. Sicut diversis temporibus loquentes, eandem diem modo per hoc adverbium "cras" designamus, dum adhuc futura est; modo per "hodie", dum praesens est; modo per "heri", dum praeterita est. Ita antequam crearetur mundus, sciebat Deus hunc creandum; postquam creatus est, scit eum creatum. Nec est hoc scire diversa, sed omnino idem de mundi creatione. Sicut antiqui Patres crediderunt Christum nasciturum et moriturum, nos autem credimus eum iam natum et mortuum; nec tamen diversa credimus nos et illi, sed eadem.' See the parallel discussion on divine power, *ibid.*, I, chap. 2, d. 44 (I, pt 2, 305–06).

For although these *voces* are many, not however are there many *nomina*, but one. We say, therefore, that [one person] is the Father, another the Son, another the Holy Spirit; not however is the Father one God, the Son another God, and the Holy Spirit another God, just as this *vox 'albus'* is another [word] than this *vox 'alba'*, not however another *nomen*.<sup>104</sup>

It would be wrong to conclude, however, that Abelard was the leader or principal figure behind the label '*secta Nominalium*'. The *secta Nominalium*, quite simply, included anyone who maintained or applied the grammatical theory of the unity of the noun to problems in logic and theology, or who accepted and defended the principle '*quod semel est verum, semper est verum*'. Some of the 'Porretani' accepted the theory of the *unitas nominis*.<sup>105</sup> Defenders may have included the 'Melidunenses', if that idea is entailed in their assertion that no *nomen* is equivocal.<sup>106</sup> There is some evidence that it might have found support among the followers of Adam Parvipontanus.<sup>107</sup> In any event, the *secta Nominalium* was not

<sup>104</sup> Alain de Lille, *Contra haereticos libri quattuor*, III, chap. 2, in PL, CCX, cols 401–02: 'Nam, licet istae voces plures sunt, non tamen sunt plura nomina, sed unum, et unius institutionis nomen. Similiter tres personae sunt unus et unius essentiae Deus [...]. Dicimus ergo, quod alius est Pater, alius Filius, alius Spiritus Sanctus, non tamen alius Deus est Pater, alius Deus est Filius, alius Deus est Spiritus Sanctus, sicut haec vox "albus" est alia quam haec vox "alba", non tamen aliud nomen.' For a fuller discussion, see Valente, *Phantasia contrarietatis*, pp. 97–104.

<sup>105</sup> This is true of the *Compendium logicae Porretanum*, pp. xxi, 3. This is also true of Evrard of Bethune, who, despite his nominalist argument for the oneness of the object of faith, wanted his readers to know that he belonged to the 'Porretani', not the 'Nominales'; *Contra Valdenses*, p. 1529: 'Ne simus Nominales in hoc, sed potius Porretani'.

<sup>106</sup> De Rijk, *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 283; Hunt, *History of Grammar*, p. 88.

<sup>107</sup> The oft-quoted premise in logic that from the impossible anything follows ('ex impossibili sequitur quidlibet') is ascribed to the 'Adamitae' in *Tractatus Emmeranus de impossibili positione*, whom de Rijk identified as the disciples of Adam Parvipontanus, and the same is ascribed to (or at least defended by) the 'Nominales' in the *Sophismata* of Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. lat. 7678, fol. 81<sup>rb</sup>. De Rijk dated the first treatise no later than the 1220s, while the second has been dated to the 1280s or 1290s. On the *Tractatus Emmeranus*, see de Rijk, 'Some Thirteenth-Century Tracts on the Game of Obligation', *Vivarium*, 12 (1974), 94–123 (p. 102). On the *Sophismata* see Pelster, 'Nominales und Reales', and Gilbert, 'Ockham, Wyclif, and the "Via Moderna"', p. 118. It would appear that de Rijk's conjecture is the correct one and that the premise was originally associated with the 'Parvipontani'. John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, II, chap. 10, p. 99 (PL, CXCIX, cols 868–69), credits Master Adam with the view 'that the same conclusion may be inferred from either of two contradictories' and that 'out of one impossibility, all impossibilities may follow' (ex uno impossibili omnia impossibilia provenire). Although John identifies Adam as English, he does not call him 'Parvipontanus' or use that name for his disciples. It should also be noted that Adam Parvipontanus was among those who opposed Abelard's

a 'school of thought' in the strict sense, but simply those who upheld a particular grammatico-logical theory, and increasingly those who applied it to theological problems. As such, *opinio Nominalium* had a much narrower meaning than non-realist logic, and it included many more logicians and theologians than simply Abelard himself and his supposed followers.

It is time to return to the main question raised at the beginning. Did medieval scholars think in terms of schools of thought? Yes, but not always. 'School' mentality was not a characteristic of the Carolingian period; it was remarkably absent throughout most of the fourteenth century; and it was far less significant in the thirteenth century than is usually thought. If the idea of 'schools of thought' was an important feature of the twelfth century and a reflection of non-institutionalized competition among twelfth-century masters, it was also more geographically, disciplinarily, and chronologically limited than has been supposed. It was probably common only to the greater Parisian area. It flourished primarily within the fields of grammar and dialectic, and, with the exception of the 'Porretani', those mentioned in theological texts, such as the 'Nominales' and the 'Montani', were invariably applying a grammatical or logical theory to a theological problem. And these 'schools' were primarily (perhaps exclusively) active in the second half of the twelfth century. By the first decade of the thirteenth century it was no longer a living reality but had become a scholastic device for labelling positions or theories (usually ones being rejected) that would be repeated down the long chain of scholastic commentaries.

Competing systems of religious belief in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries provided some of the atmosphere for seeing philosophical theories as

writings at Paris in 1147. The debate over the *ex impossibili* principle and rules of inference continued throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries apart from any 'school' connection, although it was most closely associated with the 'Parvipontani'; see de Rijk, 'Some Thirteenth-Century Tracts', p. 102; *Logica modernorum*, II, pt 1, 386–90; Y. Iwakuma, 'Parvipontani's Thesis *ex impossibili quidlibet sequitur*: Comments on the Sources of the Thesis from the Twelfth Century', in *Argumentationstheorie: Scholastische Forschungen zu den logischen und semantischen Regeln korrekten Folgerns*, ed. by Klaus Jacobi (Leiden: Brill, 1993), pp. 123–51; J. Spruyt, 'Thirteenth-Century Positions on the Rule *ex impossibili sequitur quidlibet*', *ibid.*, pp. 161–93; S. Read, 'Formal and Material Consequence, Disjunctive Syllogism and Gamma', *ibid.*, pp. 233–59 (pp. 252–54); and William J. Courtenay, 'Nominales and Rules of Inference', *ibid.*, pp. 153–60. The *ex impossibili* thesis was still allied with school self-identification in the opening years of the thirteenth century. A seal on a document of the abbey of St Victor in 1211 of an arts master identified as Guillaume de Bardenay carried on its obverse the inscription 'ex impossibili quodlibet'; see M. Douët d'Arcq, *Collection de Sceaux*, II: *Inventaires et Documents* (Paris: Plon, 1867), p. 708 n. 8046.

similarly divergent and competitive. But the main context, as Southern rightly noted, was institutional and scholastic. As in the ancient world, the phenomenon of 'schools of thought' required an urban environment and the economic resources to permit a group of young adults the leisure to study philosophy. The fact that these school labels from mid-twelfth-century Paris lived on while new ones were not being coined or added until the late thirteenth century probably reflects the growing institutionalization or re-institutionalization of learning in Paris in the opening years of the thirteenth century. Competition among masters for students and fame — the marketplace psychology of independent entrepreneurs of knowledge that had prevailed throughout much of the twelfth century — gave way at the end of the twelfth century to the self-protectionism of the corporation of masters, the growing structure of the nations in the faculty of arts, and a more controlled, regularized environment of what soon came to be the University of Paris.



## MINDING MATTER: *MATERIA* AND THE WORLD IN THE SPIRITUALITY AND THEOLOGY OF HUGH OF ST VICTOR

Grover A. Zinn

At the outset of the treatise *De archa Noe*<sup>1</sup> Hugh of St Victor recounts the occasion that gave rise to a conversation that led ultimately to the writing of the treatise. One day, Hugh says, he was answering questions put to him by his fellow regular canons, when discussion became focused on the ‘instability and restlessness’ of the human heart. Implored by his brothers in religion to show the cause of this instability and, furthermore, to teach them if it could be cured ‘by any skill [*arte*] or by the practice of some discipline [*laboris cuius libet exercitatione*]’. Hugh distinguished the cause of instability as *amor mundi* (love of the world) and the remedy as *amor Dei* (love of God).<sup>2</sup> In distinguishing the two

This is a revised version of a paper given at a conference, ‘Mind Matters’, in honour of Marcia Colish, organized by Nancy Van Deusen at the Claremont Graduate University, February 2002. I am honoured to contribute to this volume honouring Marcia Colish, my dear friend and a colleague at Oberlin College for over three decades.

<sup>1</sup> Hugonis de Sancto Victore, *De archa Noe, Libellus de formatione arche*, ed. by Patrice Sicard, CCCM, 176 (1999); PL, CLXXVI, cols 617/618–704A. The English translation of *De archa Noe* is from Hugh of St Victor, *Selected Spiritual Writings*, trans. by a Religious of CSMV, intro. by Aelred Squire (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), pp. 45–153 (hereafter CSMV). (The division of books into chapters in this paper follows Sicard’s critical Latin text, not CSMV.)

<sup>2</sup> *De archa Noe*, I.1, ed. Sicard, pp. 3–4, especially ll. 7–8 and 58–64; PL, CLXXVI, cols 617/618–618/619; CSMV, I.1–2, pp. 45–57. On the time and setting for this conversation, see Patrice Sicard, *Diagrammes médiévaux et exégèse visuelle: Le ‘Libellus de formatione arche’ de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, Bibliotheca Victorina, 4 (Paris: Brepols, 1993), pp. 9–20, especially p. 20, where he opts for the conversations held at the *hora locutionis* between noon and vespers in the

loves, he set before the brothers at this point a stark choice: turn with love either toward the world or toward God. As *De archa Noe* develops Hugh's teaching on the pursuit of the love of God and anchoring the unstable heart, the stark opposition of God and world is often reaffirmed as the tumultuous, deadly, tossing floodwaters of the biblical Flood form the emblem of love directed toward the material world, while the Ark of Noah symbolizes the soul rising from the chaos and flux of the material world of the Flood toward the enduring unity and stability of God by means of spiritual discipline and attention to the 'works of restoration' done in time for the salvation of human beings.<sup>3</sup> Yet there are passages in *De archa Noe* that also suggest a more nuanced attitude toward the world. While urging in Book IV that flight from the world is not only expedient but also necessary because the world is the occasion for an evil, lustful love and because the *pulchritudo mundi* (beauty of the world) leads people astray,<sup>4</sup> Hugh also declares:

But as far as the things themselves are concerned, everything can be thought about without any sin, for every creature of God is good [...]. What matters is not what you think about, but what sort of inclination issues from the thought. For where evil pleasure does not corrupt the conscience, there thought does not pollute the mind.<sup>5</sup>

The material world and attitudes toward it are continuing threads that run through Hugh's writings in ways that are both reinforcing and sometimes at seemingly cross-purposes. This essay proposes to explore the role *materia* and the material world in various settings in Hugh's spiritual and theological writings.

In *De archa Noe*, after having located the restlessness of the human heart in the directing of the one source of love away from the love of God to the love of the fragmented and fragmenting world — a constant element in any Augustinian view of the world and human nature — Hugh then turns to a very practical matter, the one in fact raised by his brethren when they asked for a skill or discipline to counteract the restless, unsettled heart. For Hugh, like the canons

abbey cloister. For the same conclusion (with an alternate possibility the general time for studies following manual labour in the morning), see Grover A. Zinn, 'History and Contemplation: The Dimensions of the Restoration of Man in Two Treatises on the Ark of Noah by Hugh of St. Victor' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Duke University, 1968), p. 273 n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance, *De archa Noe*, IV.2, ed. Sicard, pp. 90–92, ll. 28–45; PL, CLXXVI, col. 666AC; CSMV, IV.4, pp. 126–27.

<sup>4</sup> *De archa Noe*, IV.8, ed. Sicard, p. 108; PL, CLXXVI, col. 676A; CSMV, IV.17, p. 145.

<sup>5</sup> *De archa Noe*, IV.8, ed. Sicard, p. 109, ll. 126–28 and 136–39; PL, CLXXVI, cols 676C and 676D; CSMV, IV.17, pp. 145–46.

talking with him, it was not enough to know the cause and remedy for the disease of the unstable heart; it is of little purpose to know all these theoretical answers without knowing how to apply the remedy in a practical way to life and to have a truly effectual result in human existence. As Hugh says in a lapidary summary of the opening discussion:

See, we have shown you these stages — the disease itself, a wavering heart, unstable and restless; the cause of the disease which is clearly love of the world; and the remedy of the disease which is the love of God. And to these must be added a fourth, namely, the application of the remedy, that is, the way in which we may attain to the love of God. For without this it would be of little or no profit to know all the rest.<sup>6</sup>

The application of the remedy, it turns out, is not to be found in pursuing grand theories or scaling theological heights (although there is much theological content in Hugh's answer); nor is there some sort of extended reading project that will result in knowing how to apply the remedy to cure the cause (although the application of the remedy could, as a side result, quite naturally lead to much reading). The remedy is applied, rather surprisingly, by giving concentrated attention to a drawing described by Hugh and by applying the elements of that drawing to shape one's own life. In its very *physical* manifestation, this drawing has the potential, as Hugh presents it, to be a material means for mediating a transforming experience — providing stability in the midst of an unstable world and in face of the flux of competing loves. To quote Hugh again, as he introduces his first description of the drawing:

Now the figure of this spiritual building ('the house of God' in the human heart), which I am going to present to you is Noah's ark. This your eye shall see outwardly, so that your soul may be fashioned to its likeness inwardly. You will see there certain colours, shapes, and figures which will be pleasant to behold. But you must understand that these are put there, that from them you may learn wisdom, instruction and virtue, to adorn your soul. And because this ark denotes the church and the Church is the body of Christ, to make the illustration [*exemplar*] clearer for you I have depicted [*depinxi*] Christ and I want to represent this Person to you in such wise as Isaiah testifies that he beheld Him.<sup>7</sup>

The reference is to Isaiah's vision of the Lord enthroned in majesty as recounted in Chapter 6 of the Book of Isaiah. This figure of the 'Lord', presented by Hugh as an image of Christ seated in majesty, has many of the qualities of the 'Majesty' illuminations in Carolingian Bibles, with accompanying figures representing the four evangelists arranged at the four 'corners' of the drawing and also possibly two

<sup>6</sup> *De archa Noe*, I.1, ed. Sicard, p. 5, ll. 58–63; PL, CLXXVI, cols 619–20; CSMV, p. 47.

<sup>7</sup> *De archa Noe*, I.3, ed. Sicard, p. 10, ll. 35–46; PL, CLXXVI, col. 622C; CSMV, I.7, p. 51.

seraphim.<sup>8</sup> However, this figure of Christ is but one element in the drawing that Hugh suggests at this point and further describes in *De archa Noe* and the *Libellus de formatione archae*: it forms the encompassing or bounding figure of the drawing. In *De archa Noe* Christ in majesty is described as being accompanied by two seraphim and having the world inscribed on his body so that only his head, hands, and feet are visible; later we discover the body is also covered by a schematic drawing of a pyramid-shaped Ark of Noah, as if seen from above. From the much more detailed description of the drawing found in the *Libellus*, we know that the figure of Christ enthroned in majesty and accompanied by two seraphim holds a round symbolic cosmos that covers his body in just the way that *De archa Noe* indicates that the body is covered. This symbolic cosmos is drawn with the zodiacal signs and months in the outer ring of *aether*, with representations of the four seasons in the next ring inward, that of the *aer*, and then an oval earth at the centre. Drawn upon the oval of the earth (described by Hugh as a *mappa mundi*) and thus embedded in this cosmos (with the entire cosmos inscribed on Christ's body) is a design representing a pyramidal Noah's Ark as seen from above. Three nested rectangles centred on a square at the centre of the drawing represent the three floors of the Ark and the column in the centre supporting the pyramid-shaped Ark. Four lines comprised of three 'ladders' each that extend from the four corners of the outer rectangle to the four corners of the inner, central square represent the junctions of the four walls of the Ark that incline inward as they rise; the ladders also represent, for Hugh, four series of three-stage 'ascents' in the spiritual life, inscribed upon the physical representation of the Ark.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See my exploration of the relation of the theme and image of 'Christ enthroned in Majesty' to the essence of Hugh's project in *De archa Noe* and the *Libellus* in 'Hugh of St. Victor, Isaiah's Vision, and *De archa Noe*', in *The Church and the Arts*, Studies in Church History, 28 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 99–116. For an exemplary Christ in Majesty, see the Stavelot Bible, London, British Library, MS Add. 28017, fol. 136, dated 1093–97. C. H. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800–1200* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), fig. 269 and pp. 269–73. See also Dodwell, fig. 204 and p. 211 for an 'impressive' sacramentary from St Denis (perhaps St Vlaast) dating from the mid-eleventh century with a Christ in Majesty accompanied not only by evangelists but two seraphim and an array of angels (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 9436, fol. 15<sup>v</sup>). The Metz Coronation Sacramentary, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 1141, fol. 6<sup>r</sup>, has a full-page illumination showing Christ enthroned with two seraphim. The illumination is associated with the Sanctus of the Mass. See Robert G. Calkins, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 162–77.

<sup>9</sup> For a more complete analysis of the figures of Christ, the cosmos, with the earth and the diagram of the Ark and the inscriptions which accompany all of these elements, see Zinn, 'Hugh

This complex and detailed drawing, which Hugh describes in both *De archa Noe* and the *Libellus*, was brightly coloured, filled almost to overflowing with vivid images and extensive inscriptions, and meant by Hugh to be used as a visual device to support and advance individual spiritual meditation and transformation, as I have argued elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> Conrad Rudolph has recently remarked, quite appropriately, that this drawing is ‘the most complex single work of figural art from the entire Middle Ages’.<sup>11</sup> Opinions differ over whether the drawing/painting of this image ever existed or if the treatises describe a memory device to be ‘constructed’ entirely in the mind of the reader.<sup>12</sup> I remain convinced by Hugh’s personal references to making/showing the drawing in *De archa Noe* and the detailed description in *Libellus* that the drawing once existed, probably on a large parchment surface made by sewing smaller pieces together like the Ebsdorf world

of Saint-Victor, Isaiah’s Vision’; ‘*De gradibus ascensionum*: The Stages of Contemplative Ascent in Two Treatises on Noah’s Ark by Hugh of St. Victor’, *Studies in Medieval Culture*, 5 (1975), 61–79; ‘Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor’, *History of Religions*, 12 (1973), 317–41; ‘Exile, the Abbey of Saint-Victor at Paris and Hugh of Saint-Victor’, in *Medieval Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Jeremy duQuesnay Adams*, ed. by Stephanie Hayes-Healy, New Middle Ages, 2 vols (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), II, 83–111. (The latter study has my proposed reconstruction of the drawing; ‘Hugh of Saint-Victor, Isaiah’s Vision’ has a schematic of the symbolic cosmos, the Ark and other selected elements.) See also Sicard’s lengthy and important study, based on his critical text of *De archa Noe* and the *Libellus*, entitled *Diagrammes médiévaux et exégèse visuelle*. Sicard’s critical Latin edition (CCCM, 176) is accompanied by a series of sheets with a proposed reconstruction of the drawing of Christ, cosmos, and Ark (CCCM, 176A). Partial reconstruction by J. Ehlers, ‘*Arca significant ecclesiam*: Ein theologisches Weltmodell aus der ersten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts’, *Frühmittelalterlichen Studien*, 6 (1972), 171–87. See also the reconstruction suggested by Danielle Lecoq, ‘La “Mappemonde” du *De archa Noe mystica* de Hugues de Saint-Victor (1128–1129)’, in *Géographie du monde au moyen âge et à la renaissance*, ed. by Monique Pelletier (Paris: Éditions du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1989). Conrad Rudolph, “First I Find the Center Point”: Reading the Text of Hugh of Saint Victor’s “The Mystic Ark”, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 94 (2004), is a preliminary study of the text of Hugh’s *Libellus* and, to a lesser extent, *De archa Noe*, with an eye toward a full presentation of a reconstructed drawing. See figs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13 with figs 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, and thirteen reproduced in colour as frontispieces.

<sup>10</sup> Zinn, ‘Mandala’, and ‘Isaiah’s vision’. See also Zinn, ‘*De gradibus ascensionum*’.

<sup>11</sup> Rudolph, “First I Find the Center Point”, pp. 1–2.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Carruthers has argued that the drawing never existed and the texts point to mnemonic devices. See *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 231–33 (p. 239), and *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 243–46.

map, although a wall painting is not out of the question. In any case, there is no indication that the drawing at Saint-Victor survived the medieval period.

The importance of a 'material' drawing with 'material' contents is underscored by a closing passage found in a majority (84 out of 143) of the manuscripts of *De archa Noe*.<sup>13</sup> The passage reaffirms the formative role of the drawing itself by enjoining the reader/viewer to behold the Ark drawing and then impress the 'form of this pattern' (i.e., the pattern of the Ark drawing) 'on your heart'. The entire passage reads:

And now, then, as we promised, we must put before you the pattern [*exemplar*] of our ark. Thus you may learn from an external form, which we have visibly depicted, what you ought to do interiorly, and when you have impressed the form of this pattern [*huius exemplaris formam*] on your heart, you may rejoice that the house of God has been built in you.<sup>14</sup>

Thus the material Ark of Noah, as envisioned by Hugh in these two treatises, has become an image drawn upon a material surface, an image that in turn becomes a material medium for symbolic forms that have the ability to shape the inner self so that a dwelling place for the divine will result. Matter is worth minding at Saint-Victor, for it is the medium of transformation, not simply something from which one must flee in order to be transformed. Improper use and understanding of matter and the material world must be fled, but properly understood and properly apprehended, matter is not merely a 'beautiful world'; it becomes the vehicle for transformation at Saint-Victor. As Hugh puts it so well in his introductory handbook for biblical interpretation, *De scripturis et scribtoribus sacris*, one should not despise the literal/historical sense of the biblical text, which contains the deeds, dust, dirt, and stones<sup>15</sup> of history. After all, Jesus mixed the dust of the earth with his saliva to anoint the eyes of the blind man and restore his sight.<sup>16</sup> So the very earthiness of Sacred Scripture can, under the guidance of the

<sup>13</sup> Noted by Rudolph, "First I Find the Center Point", p. 64. This is also the text in two major manuscripts from the abbey of Saint-Victor; see *ibid.*, p. 64 and n. 184.

<sup>14</sup> *De archa Noe*, IV.9, ed. Sicard, p. 117, ll. 168–73; PL, CLXXVI, col. 680D; CSMV, IV.21, p. 153.

<sup>15</sup> For history and the historical reading of Scripture as the 'rough stones' of the subterranean foundation for the edifice of faith (i.e., theology/allegory) see the *Didascalicon*, VI.4, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 802B–803D. The English translation is from *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor*, trans. by Jerome Taylor, Records of Western Civilization (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 74–79.

<sup>16</sup> *De scripturis et scribtoribus sacris*, chap. 5, in PL, CLXXV, cols 13A–15A; for healing the blind man, see cols 14D–15A. The reference is to the Gospel of John 9. 1–7. On the literal sense, see

human, fleshly Incarnate Word, restore the sight of fallen humanity and lead one to higher levels of understanding.

Others and I have undertaken to describe in more detail and attempt various reconstructions of Hugh's lost drawing.<sup>17</sup> It is not my purpose in this brief essay to pursue the reconstruction of this drawing in more detail. I do, however, want to draw attention to the content and context of what Hugh says about one of those colourful and significant shapes found in the Ark drawing, namely the central column, which is shown as a richly coloured, heavily inscribed square in the exact centre of the drawing. The column stretching from the lowest level of the Ark, its keel, to the cubit at the summit of the Ark symbolizes Christ in his two natures, human and divine. Below, in his humanity, he calls humans to return to their true selves, and he helps in the pursuit of virtue and the contemplative life. Above, in his divinity, he is the goal of the contemplative quest and the fulfilment of the transformative power of burning, melting, and transforming divine love. The colours of the square represent the two natures. Half the square is flame-coloured (*in flammeo colore*) for the 'divine majesty'; the other half is painted sapphire (*in saphirino colore*) for humanity. (The colours are also given a reference to Hebrew Scripture as well, the fire (*in flammeo colore*) and cloud (*in saphirino colore*) that accompanied the Hebrews as they journeyed toward Mount Sinai in the Exodus.) Finally, the square has inscribed on it a golden cross with the image of the Lamb of God at the centre of the cross, emphasizing the sacrificial aspect of Christ's life and work.<sup>18</sup>

Hugh's comments on the column and its multiple meanings occur at the conclusion of Book II of *De archa Noe*, a point at which he ends his first foray into describing the pyramidal Ark of the drawing (as opposed to the five-storied, house-on-a-hull Ark of his literal exegesis of the Ark texts in Genesis as presented in Book I of *De archa Noe*).<sup>19</sup> The column, 'to which the whole structure leans' as

Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, rev. edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), chap. 3.1, especially pp. 93–95.

<sup>17</sup> See n. 9, above.

<sup>18</sup> For the details of the square in the centre, not all of which are given here, see *Libellus*, I.1, ed. Sicard, pp. 121–23, ll. 1–47.

<sup>19</sup> On Hugh's literal exegesis of the biblical description of the Ark and his description of a five-storeyed, house-on-a-hull Ark, see Grover A. Zinn, 'Hugh of St. Victor and the Ark of Noah: A New Look', *Church History*, 40 (1971), 261–72. The pyramidal shape of the Ark (which is what Hugh drew) is also discussed. In *De archa Noe* after presenting the five-storeyed Ark he says that he has depicted a three-storeyed, pyramid-shaped Ark because if the walls were vertical (as in the five-storeyed Ark) it would be impossible to show the vertical walls in a two-dimensional plan.

Hugh carefully points out, and which is thirty cubits high and one cubit square in cross-section, is symbolic of 'the tree of life which was planted in the midst of paradise, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ, set up in the midst of His Church for all believers alike as the reward of work, the End of the journey, and the victor's crown'.<sup>20</sup> Just as the column reaches from the bottom depths of the Ark to the summit of the structure, so Hugh says of Jesus:

He it is who rose from the earth and pierced the heavens, who came down to the depths yet did not leave the heights, who is Himself both above and below, above in His majesty, below in His compassion, above that He may draw our longings thither, below that He may offer us His help. Below He is among us, above He is above us. Below is what He took from us, above is what He sets before us.<sup>21</sup>

The duality/unity of Christ's two natures as reflected in varied evocations of his presence 'below' and 'above', presented here with respect to the column in the centre of the Ark, is a repeated theme in the Ark treatises and elsewhere in Hugh's writings.<sup>22</sup> In his humanity, Christ is 'below' and 'among us' to 'help' human beings. In his divinity, he is 'above', thus drawing humans to celestial things and the transforming effect of divine love. Yet, as we shall see, if Christ were not 'below' and 'among us' in his humanity (i.e., his fleshly materiality) there would be no access to the 'above' and things divine.

After introducing the column as symbolic of Christ as the Tree of Life, Hugh soon associates a second reference with the column: Christ as the Book of Life, along with a reference to the polyvalent use of 'word' with reference to Book, Christ, and the world. In the Ark drawing, the dual reference of the column to Book and Tree is carried out explicitly in the iconography, in relation especially

With the pyramid-shaped Ark they can be shown, since they slope inward as they rise to the summit (placed at the centre of the drawing). Hugh says: 'There are some who say that there were only three storeys in the ark [...]. We have depicted this form in preference to the other, because we were unable to show the height of the walls in a flat drawing. For in this plan the ascending beams are gradually brought together until they meet in the measure of a single cubit' (*De archa Noe*, I.4, ed. Sicard, p. 23; PL, CLXXVI, col. 629CD; CSMV, I.13, p. 63). It should be noted that the comment in note 3, on p. 63 of CSMV is incorrect. This pyramidal drawing of the Ark is indeed part of the drawing 'already mentioned on p. 52'.

<sup>20</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.6, ed. Sicard, p. 42; PL, CLXXVI, col. 640CD; CSMV, II.8, p. 82.

<sup>21</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.6, ed. Sicard, p. 42; PL, CLXXVI, col. 640CD; CSMV, II.8, p. 82.

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., *Libellus*, chap. 1, ed. Sicard, pp. 125–26, ll. 108–57; PL, CLXXVI, cols 684A–685A (chap. 2 in PL). In this text the colour green is assigned to Christ's divinity and the function of Tree; sapphire is assigned to his humanity (as in the cubit at the summit) and to the Book.

to the four stages (with three divisions each) of the ascetic/contemplative return to God.<sup>23</sup> Christ as Book relates to the first (awakening) and third (illumination) stages of return; Christ as Tree relates to the second (purification) and fourth (traditionally 'union or perfection'; here not perfection but continuing advance beyond transforming fire of divine love in stage three). One side of the column, facing north (and thus to the left side of the Ark, since on the cosmos/map the Ark is oriented with prow to the east) is designated Book of Life. To indicate this visually, Hugh draws a hand extended from the north side of the column and holding a book. One page shows the opening of Genesis and is meant to convey the idea that the first knowledge of God comes from the created world (this page of the Book faces the ladders representing the three levels of the stage of illumination in the contemplative quest). The other visible page of the Book contains the phrase 'Vae, vae, vae' (Woe, woe, woe) and faces the ladders representing the first stage, 'awakening', with the words meant to induce the first step of return on the contemplative/ascetic way, a step labelled 'fear' in the drawing. The south side of the column represents the Tree of Life and has two branches extending from it, one with leaves and the other with fruit. The leaves extend toward the ladders for the second stage of contemplative advance, 'purification', a stage that consists primarily of penance and purification from vices; the leaves are interpreted as Christ's role of shielding believers from the heat of the vices. The branch with fruit extends toward the ladders for the fourth and final stage advance, 'union or perfection' in which Christ feeds the faithful with the fruit of fulfilment. In a set of four visual 'indicators' (with shapes and colours) attached to the column as Book or Life and Tree of Life, Hugh has distinguished four roles for Christ as 'column' supporting the four stages of spiritual advance — Christ awakens, shades, illumines, and feeds. Awakening and illumining (the Book) are particularly associated with Christ's humanity as he provides an example for human beings; shading and feeding (the Tree) are associated with his divinity, for the virtue of the Godhead supplies the remedy for human sin, ignorance and alienation from God.

<sup>23</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.5–7, ed. Sicard, pp. 40–45, chap. 5, l. 1–chap. 7, l. 79; PL, CLXXVI, cols 639D–642C; CSMV, II.8–10, pp. 81–86. The four ascents (with three ladders, and stages, in series for each) as well as a multitude of details concerning the crucial and complex iconography and inscriptions for these ascents can be found in the *Libellus*, chaps 4–9, ed. Sicard, p. 140, l. 36–p. 155, l. 159; PL, CLXXVI, cols 692B–699D (in PL, chaps 7–13). The iconography and other details are studied in detail in Zinn, 'Mandala', 'Isaiah's Vision', and 'Exile' and in Berndt, *Diagrammes médiévaux*.

Having laid out the iconography of the column with a brief presentation (which will be expanded), Hugh turns to an analysis of the threefold nature of Book, Tree, and Word, an analysis steeped in his theological and spiritual views. He creates a narrative of distinction and comparison in this analysis by weaving themes such as human finitude, earthly decay, awakening, salvation, eternity, and stability into a subtle analysis of three kinds of books, trees and words. This complex fabric of relationships, much like a multi-themed fugue, presents a powerful evocation of the material word and Christ, particularly his (material) humanity, as mediating figures in the human quest for knowledge of God and individual transformation leading to experience of the divine. Indeed, there is not only visual power but also a tactile/material dimension in Hugh's analysis of the Book of Life in the context of the 'three books'. The first type of book is a book made by human hands out of the skins of dead animals or other perishable materials.<sup>24</sup> These books represent the descent of human-fabricated objects into nothingness. As Hugh says, 'as these [materials] last for only a short time, the books themselves grow old and in their own way are reduced to nothing, leaving no vestige of themselves behind.' The death and decay of books mirrors the fate of humans: Everyone who reads these books will grow old and die. Material books made of animal skins and the readers of these books are, thus, on a death-directed trajectory. Such books serve Hugh in the remainder of Book II of *De archa noe* as an emblem of the perishable nature of human works and human life itself.<sup>25</sup>

The second book is the 'book of the world', a book created by the Wisdom of God, the second person of the Trinity. This book never ceases to exist and is a 'visible work' in which 'the invisible wisdom of the Creator' has been 'visibly written'.<sup>26</sup> The theme of the world as a book, 'written' by the Wisdom of God, begotten from God, and read by human beings who are spiritually 'awake' is a constantly recurring theme in Hugh's writings. It has an important place in works as diverse as *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, Hugh's famous doctrinal *summa*, the meditation on Creation, *De tribus diebus*, and the spiritual treatise *De arrha animae*, as we shall see later in this essay.

The third book is an eternal book that God has not created but rather one that he has begotten: the eternal Wisdom of God, 'in which from all eternity he had written beforehand all the things the He was going to make according to

<sup>24</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.9, ed. Sicard, p. 47; PL, CLXXVI, col. 643BC; CSMV, II.11, p. 88.

<sup>25</sup> See *De archa Noe*, II.12–13, ed. Sicard, pp. 50–51; PL, CLXXVI, col. 644CD; CSMV, II.13, p. 90.

<sup>26</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.9–10, ed. Sicard, p. 48; PL, CLXXVI, col. 643D; CSMV, II.12, p. 88.

the purpose of His providence and His predestination'. This eternal book, the Wisdom of God himself, is truly the 'Book of Life'.<sup>27</sup>

Next, Hugh delineates through sameness and difference a pattern of 'three words'.<sup>28</sup> The first word is the word spoken by human beings. Again, like books made by humans, human words are something destined for nothingness: they 'cease when uttered'. The second word is the 'Word of God', that is, the created material world which once created never ceases to exist although it does change. The third Word is the Word of God, begotten not created/made, which has no beginning or ending and experiences no change. This, like the third book, is Life, the Word of Life.

In a nearby passage in *De archa Noe* Hugh expounds at length on the world as a 'word' of God, calling it an 'outward word' of God's, 'being that which issues from his mouth'. This might seem like a simple figure of speech, presenting the world as an 'utterance'. However, with the Christ/Ark drawing in mind, one finds an embedded textual reference to one of the more striking visual images of the drawing's iconography. To a reader familiar with the drawing, the world as a word coming from Christ's mouth would have an immediate visual reference, which would also be a visual reference set in a rich context of cosmic and soteriological images and themes. In the drawing, the cosmos, with earth at the centre and the Ark inscribed upon the earth, is placed so that paradise and the bow of the Ark (the beginning of the timeline of history along the keel of the Ark) are just beneath Christ's mouth as he holds the cosmos in front of his body. From his mouth a series of six medallions descends, terminating in paradise. Each disc is inscribed with images representing the appropriate day of Creation, culminating with the placement of Adam and Eve in the earthly paradise.<sup>29</sup> Such vertical dispositions of discs or scenes representing the six days of Creation were not unknown in Hugh's day; they could be found especially in illuminations of the opening verse of Genesis, where the *I* of *In principio* might well carry representations of the six days of Creation on six discs or medallions along vertical part of the *I*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.10, ed. Sicard, p. 48; PL, CLXXVI, col. 644A; CSMV, II.12, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup> *De archa Noe*, II.11, ed. Sicard, p. 49; PL, CLXXVI, col. 644A; CSMV, II.12, p. 89.

<sup>29</sup> *Libellus*, chap. 11, ed. Sicard, p. 160, l. 85–p. 161, l. 101; PL, CLXXVI, col. 702BC (chap. 15). For more details on this, see the literature in nn. 8 and 23, above.

<sup>30</sup> See Walter Cahn, *Romanesque Bible Illumination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 130, with mention of the illumination of the opening *I* of the first verse of Genesis in the Lobbes Bible (fig. 84), Tournai, Bibliothèque du Séminaire, MS 1, fol. 6.

The pattern of three trees reflects the same hierarchy of earthly — Christological — eternal verities as the first two triads, although there is one important difference: there are *three* Trees of Life, whereas there is only one Book of Life and one Word of Life.<sup>31</sup> The first Tree of Life is the ‘material tree’ planted in paradise in the beginning. This Tree is forever removed from human experience through the Fall and expulsion from the earthly paradise. The second Tree of Life is Christ ‘planted in the midst of His Church’ as his *human* nature. The third Tree of Life is planted in the ‘invisible Paradise’ and is the Wisdom of God, whose fruit feeds the blessed angels. Hugh sums up by saying in a passage combining eschatological, cosmological, ‘historical’, and soteriological references: ‘Man was created for the third (tree), cast out from the first, recalled by the second.’ He continues with a brief evocation of the presence of the Tree of Life in paradise (all three), where it is watered by springs of living waters and never withers but remains green.<sup>32</sup>

In each triad related to Book, Word, and Tree the second category of the three is the most interesting from the viewpoint of ‘minding matter’. The first category of each triad stresses matter that vanishes from the human world — decaying books, words fading into silence, the lost tree of the earthly paradise closed to humans. The third category of each triad represents the unchanging divine in one manifestation or another — eternal Wisdom creating the world, eternal Wisdom as the book in which God has written his pattern for Creation, the eternal Tree of Life (i.e., Christ) in the invisible paradise. The second category, like the first, refers to the material world or human nature, but in a way entirely unlike the references in the first category. The second category mediates a divine presence through matter, a presence otherwise beyond experience for ordinary human beings. The book that mediates a divine presence is fully material; it is the world as a ‘book’ written by God’s Wisdom in his creatures so that from visible things humans might learn of the invisible. The world as a ‘word’ expressed by divine Wisdom is a material ‘word’ that continues ‘forever’ and does not perish like the human word that fades to silence once uttered. Finally, the second tree is the

<sup>31</sup> *De archa Noë*, II.12, ed. Sicard, pp. 49–50; PL, CLXXVI, col. 644B; CSMV, II.12, p. 89. The translation by CSMV omits ‘of life’ in the opening sentence, which is translated: ‘There are three trees.’ The critical texts of Migne and Sicard read: ‘*Item tria sunt ligna vite*: There are three trees of life.’ Introducing the paragraphs on books and trees, the Latin text has no reference to ‘life’: ‘*Tres sunt libri*’ and ‘*Item tres sunt verba*’.

<sup>32</sup> On the idea of paradise in Christian thought, see, most recently, Alessandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), with exhaustive bibliography. See also, Jean Delumeau, *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, trans. by Matthew O’Connell (New York: Continuum, 1995).

humanity (materiality) of Christ as he is present 'in the midst' of the Church mediating divine presence, healing, calling back, and transforming through his human presence 'down here' in the world, while he also is present 'up there' in heaven — the two extremities of the column in the centre of the Ark.

Although not particularly remarked upon by Hugh in the section of *De archa Noe* dealing with the column, these three mediating manifestations of the divine differ in a very important way that is fundamental to Hugh's theology. The mediating Book and Word can be classed with the 'works of creation', by which Hugh means the created world in all of its variety, beauty, and finitude.<sup>33</sup> The mediating Tree is part, indeed the centre, of the 'works of restoration' comprised of the Incarnation of the Word and the Sacraments that precede and follow him in order to mediate restoration.<sup>34</sup> Thus Book and Word have a fundamental difference from Tree as mediators. However, in *De sacramentis*, when discussing human knowledge of God, Hugh outlines a theological position that accounts for a prelapsarian inward experience of divine presence, which has been lost in the Fall, for the present ignorance of humans, and for the absolute need for the natural world to be a visible means of apprehending knowledge of the Triune divine — a knowledge inaccessible, however, to individuals until they have been awakened by the 'call' of Christ's *humanity* and purified so that they may again 'read' the Book of Creation as revelatory of God's self and purposes. Indeed, as Hugh puts it in *De sacramentis*: The Book of divine presence/knowledge was written within and without for humans as originally created: inwardly they had knowledge of their Creator and outwardly they 'read' the world rightly. After sin and the Fall, the inner sense of divine presence vanished and the ability to 'read' the world was greatly diminished. Only the world in its 'thereness' was immediately available to humans. This required a 'second writing' of the Book in another 'material' form — this time in the Incarnation.<sup>35</sup> Book IV of *De archa Noe* contains sections

<sup>33</sup> On the beauty of the world as the divine 'work' of Creation and expressed 'Word', see *De archa Noe*, II.14, ed. Sicard, pp. 51–52, ll. 8–14; PL, CLXXVI, col. 645B; CSMV, II.13, p. 91 ('opus est pulchrum').

<sup>34</sup> For Hugh's definition of the works of restoration (and the works of Creation), see *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, I.prol.2; PL, CLXXVI, cols 183B–184A. The distinction appears repeatedly in Book IV of *De archa Noe* as Hugh discusses the process of salvation in terms of the world and the individual.

<sup>35</sup> *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, I.3.20 and I.6.5; PL, CLXXVI, cols 225AB and 267B–268B. The English translation is from *Hugh of Saint Victor on the Sacraments of the Christian Faith (De sacramentis)*, trans. by Roy J. Deferrari, Mediaeval Academy of America, 58 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), pp. 50, 97–98. In I.6.5 Hugh employs the image of the multiple

in which Christ in his humanity — and divinity — is described in passages of deeply moving affectivity as one who calls ‘outwardly’ to human beings and entices them to seek out the true heavenly homeland and desire the transforming fire of divine love.<sup>36</sup>

This same conception of the cosmos as a material book that reveals the Triune Creator, but is readable only by people of faith, can be found in the exquisite treatise *De tribus diebus*.<sup>37</sup> As an extended meditation on the variety, usefulness, power, beauty, coordination, and other qualities of things and creatures to be found in the visible world, this treatise deserves more attention than it will receive in this brief consideration. The opening section of the treatise quotes Romans 1. 20, the key biblical text for Hugh when presenting the world as a visible representation of divine, invisible realities: ‘Invisibilia enim ipsius a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur.’<sup>38</sup> For Hugh, the three invisible things of God manifest in the visible creation are power, wisdom, and goodness, the characteristics of the three persons of the Trinity. In the great variety of creatures and things of the world Hugh traces out the manifestation of the Trinity of Father, Son/Wisdom, and Holy Spirit for those who have the ability to see with clarified vision deeper significance of the colours, shapes, smells, and other characteristics of the ‘beautiful world’.

A particularly important passage with striking imagery occurs in the section entitled *De pulchritudine* (On Beauty). After an almost rhapsodic passage in which Hugh exults in the way in which the visible world delights the mind,

writings of a Book: once within humans at Creation, when God was inwardly experienced and ‘known’, and twice without, once in the created world and once in Christ’s humanity. See also, *Expositio in hierarchiam. coelestem*, I.1, in PL, CLXXV, cols 923D–927A, where the same themes are sounded, with variations.

<sup>36</sup> *De archa Noe*, IV.3–4, 6, ed. Sicard, pp. 94–102; PL, CLXXVI, 669A–672D; CSMV, IV.8–12, pp. 130–38. See especially Sicard, p. 95, l.21–p. 97, l. 81, CSMV, pp. 132–34, for highly evocative and affective language of the ‘call’ of the Bridegroom to the Bride drawing on the Song of Songs and nuptial imagery therein.

<sup>37</sup> Hugonis de Sancto Victore, *De tribus diebus*, ed. by Dominique Poirel, CCCM, 177 (2002); PL, CLXXVI, cols 811C–838D (as Book VII of Hugh’s *Didascalicon*). See the studies by Dominique Poirel, *Livre de la nature et débat trinitaire au XIIe siècle: Le ‘De tribus diebus’ de Hughes de Saint-Victor*, Bibliotheca Victorina, 14 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002) and by Wanda Czeweski, ‘Reading the World as Scripture: Hugh of St. Victor’s *De tribus diebus*’, *Florilegium*, 9 (1987), 65–88, and ‘Beauty and the Beasts: Allegorical Zoology in Twelfth-Century Hexameral Literature’, in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jauneau*, ed. by Haijo Jan Westra (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 289–300.

<sup>38</sup> *De tribus diebus*, chap. 1, ed. Poirel, p. 3, ll. 5–6; PL, CLXXVI, col. 811C.

informs the senses, and arouses the affections, he introduces a vivid and ‘tactile’ image of the world as a book and of bookmaking. The world is, he says, ‘like a kind of sensible book written by the finger of God’.<sup>39</sup> Hugh continues by contrasting the ‘illiterate’ who when placed before a book may see letters, but they can only make out the forms, not the meaning. These people are like beasts. Others, who are spiritual, not only consider the outward beauty of the works (*pulcritudinem operis*); they are able to grasp within how marvellous is the wisdom of the Creator.

The distinction between those who understand the meaning of the book of nature because they are able to ‘read’ the meaning of the material things in the sensible universe and those who do not understand the meaning and only appreciate and remark only upon the beauty of ‘colour’ and ‘form’ of nature<sup>40</sup> can be taken as merely a distinction between those who are literate and those who are ‘illiterate’ — that is, those who cannot ‘read’ properly whatever the reading material may be. However, recalling the wording of the introduction of the drawing of Christ in Majesty in Book I of *De archa Noe*, this reference to the meaning (or lack of meaning) of colour and form in the natural world suggests that we are right to see the references to colour and form in Hugh’s first description of the drawing in *De archa Noe*<sup>41</sup> as ‘material objects’ that are meant to mediate not only knowledge but potentially transforming knowledge.

*De tribus diebus* has one other passage with a significant bearing on the source of the deeper meaning that is derived from ‘reading’ the material world properly. Immediately following the image of the book written by God’s finger, Hugh uses language about the deeper meaning to be found by those who can ‘read’ the world that closely parallels the language he uses in his *accessus* to Scripture, *De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris*, when he discusses the reason that one can find a deeper meaning in Scripture and the techniques by which one may seek out those meanings. In *De tribus* he writes:

This entire sensible world is a kind of book, as it were, written by the finger of God, that is created by divine power, and individual creatures are kinds of figures [*figurae*], as it were, not invented [designated] by human agreement [*humano placito*] but instituted by the divine will [*divino arbitrio*] for manifesting and signifying, as it were, the invisible Wisdom of God.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *De tribus diebus*, chap. 4, ed. by Poirel, pp. 8–9, ll. 78–109, especially ll. 94–98 for the ‘sensible book’; PL, CLXXVI, cols 813D–814C. Note the echo of God writing on the tablets of stone in Exodus 31. 18.

<sup>40</sup> *De tribus diebus*, chap. 4, ed. by Poirel, p. 10, ll. 107–09; PL, CLXXVI, col. 814C.

<sup>41</sup> See the text quoted above, n. 7.

<sup>42</sup> *De tribus diebus*, chap. 4, ed. by Poirel, p. 9, ll. 96–98; PL, CLXXVI, col. 814B.

Thus, the deeper meaning of the things found in the world is instituted by God, not established by some sort of human agreement about meaning. *De scripturis* presents a similar understanding of the nature of the deeper meaning of Scripture.<sup>43</sup> After pointing out that in the works of ‘the philosophers’ meaning is limited to the meaning of the words, Hugh notes that in Sacred Scripture not only do words have meanings, but the things to which the words refer also have meanings. Moreover, the meaning of words is from ‘custom’, represents the ‘human voice’, and comes from ‘the agreement of human beings’ (*placito hominum*). The meaning of things, however, is ‘dictated by nature’, is ‘the voice of God to humans’, and comes from ‘the operation of the will of the Creator’ (*ex operatione Creatoris volentis*) so that certain things will be signified by other things. The first characteristic of things in Scripture that leads to deeper understanding is *materia*,<sup>44</sup> and the outer form of things is described as consisting of colours and figures (*colores, figurae*), clearly paralleling here the colours and forms of figures in the book of nature that are beheld by all, admired but not understood by the ‘illiterate’, and ‘read’ only by some. Although Scripture is contrasted with the works of the philosophers to distinguish texts with deeper meaning and texts with only the ‘surface’ word, the basis of the deeper meaning is expressed with the same terminology for ‘reading’ the world and ‘reading’ Scripture: in both cases the meaning is not based on human agreement but rather is established by the disposition of the divine will as related to the material world, the world of things (*res*).

In conclusion I would like to turn to two short works that may be considered more devotional in nature: *De substantia dilectionis* (On the Nature of Loving) and *Soliloquium de arrha animae* (Soliloquy on the Soul’s Betrothal Gift).

*De substantia dilectionis*<sup>45</sup> is a short devotional work on love that uses images of a road (*via*) and the figure of love/lover as a person running along the road. As employed by Hugh these images create a classification of the objects of love and

<sup>43</sup> *De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris*, chap. 14; PL, CLXXV, cols 20D–21A.

<sup>44</sup> *De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris*, chap. 14; PL, CLXXV, col. 21.

<sup>45</sup> *De substantia dilectionis*, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 14–18, where it is printed as Chapter 4 of *Institutiones in decalogum*. It is listed as a separate treatise in the *Indiculum*, 2.39; see Joseph de Ghellinck, ‘La Table des matières de la première édition des oeuvres de Hugues de Saint-Victor’, *Recherches de science religieuse*, 1 (1910), 270–89, 385–96 (pp. 281 and 392). See Rudolf Goy, *Die Überlieferung der Werke Hugos von St. Viktor: Ein Beitrag zur Kommunikationsgeschichte des Mittelalters*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 14 (Stuttgart: Hiersmann, 1976), pp. 392–99 (manuscripts), p. 399 (comments). *De substantia dilectionis* is translated into English as ‘Of the Nature of Love’, in CSMV, pp. 187–91.

distinguish the ways in which love relates to various objects. The metaphor of the road emphasizes a linking aspect of love, while the lover as one who runs (*currens*) lends a dynamic quality and a notion of intentionality to the conceptual scheme. Throughout the treatise, love is presented as the motive power for all human actions, and for God's act of Creation as well.<sup>46</sup> The problem is, as the title says, the 'nature' of love. The question is, is it good or bad love. For Hugh all love comes from one source that leads to either good loving or bad loving (here envisioned as a single spring of love that flows into two streams: good love and bad love). The question for humans is how to set love in 'order' so that it is good, not bad. Badness, or evil, does not reside in the object of love but rather in the way that object is loved:

For everything that exists is good; but, when that which is good is wrongly loved, the thing in itself is good, but the love of it is bad. So it is not the lover, nor what he loves, nor the love wherewith he loves it that is evil; but it is the fact that he loves it wrongly that is altogether evil. Only set charity in order, then, and there is no evil left.<sup>47</sup>

In accord with his general Augustinian presuppositions, Hugh insists that only God may be truly enjoyed by the lover as fulfilment for her/his desires; hence one and only one 'object' may be enjoyed in and of itself: God. Hugh, however, 'complicates' the idea of the lover as one who 'runs' toward an object by making two sets of distinctions. First he distinguishes three ways in which desire relates to the object of desire: desire can impel the lover to run 'because of' (*de*), 'with' (*cum*), or 'toward' (*in*) something. He also divides potential objects of desire into three classes or categories: God, the neighbour, and the material world.<sup>48</sup>

All three modes of loving relationship, that is, the three ways of running, are permitted with respect to God and are thus rightly ordered with respect to God. With the neighbour, only two are permitted ('with' and 'because of'). In the case of the world, one may only run (i.e., love) 'because of' the world.

The lover runs 'because of' God, for God gives the creature the power to love. One runs 'with' God when the runner acts in conformity with the divine will. To run 'toward' God means to love God in such a way that one seeks to rest, that is, to find tranquillity and fulfilment in God. In allowing one to run 'toward' God and God alone, Hugh seeks to underscore yet again the fact that only God can be the final goal toward which the lover runs, the ultimate focus of the intention of love.

<sup>46</sup> *De subst. dil.*, PL, CLXXV, col. 16AC; CSMV, pp. 188–89.

<sup>47</sup> *De subst. dil.*, PL, CLXXV, col. 16A; CSMV, p. 188.

<sup>48</sup> *De subst. dil.*, PL, CLXXV, col. 17AB; CSMV, p. 189.

The neighbour is loved by running 'because of' or 'with' him or her. To run 'because of' someone is to rejoice in that person's salvation. To run 'with' someone is to long to have him or her as 'a fellow-traveller on the road to God and a companion when the goal is reached'.<sup>49</sup> To run 'toward' a person would be totally inappropriate, for that would mean directing one's ultimate intention toward a finite being rather than seeking God. The proper positive love of neighbour has an important place in Hugh's thought, however. In *De sacramentis christianae fidei* Hugh examines love of neighbour in great detail, with elements from the classical friendship tradition included as the discussion shifts from neighbour (*proximum*) to friend (*amicus*). One does not love the neighbour for either utility or pleasure (Hugh says not for riches, fortitude, or beauty), for friendship is predicated on loving the good that the friend loves and in some degree possesses through the justice, goodness, and truth, which are from God.<sup>50</sup>

The world may be loved in one way only, by running 'because of' it. To run 'because of' the world means to perceive the outward, material world as a divine work that calls each person to turn and seek God within the self. This perception of the material world as a positive manifestation of God's works, an outward means of apprehending the divine, is yet another manifestation of the positive role of the material world in the spiritual quest for knowledge, and, finally, experience of God. The material world, properly understood, is presented in an outward call of God, a beautiful gift, that is perceived for what it truly is once a person has been awakened, purified, and formed to perceive the inner meaning of the book/word of the world.<sup>51</sup> It is also true that the world *as such*, as a beautiful world created for human nurture and enjoyment, is a call to each to respond to the divine gift of the created world, apart from the deeper apprehension of the symbolic meaning of the world as a visible manifestation symbolizing invisible divine truths.<sup>52</sup> The inclusion of the mechanical arts (weaving, carpentry, metalworking, etc.) posi-

<sup>49</sup> *De subst. dil.*, PL, CLXXVI, col. 18A; CSMV, p. 190.

<sup>50</sup> *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, II.13.6; PL, CLXXVI, col. 529C; trans. Deferrari, p. 379. See II.23.10, PL, CLXXVI, cols 536B–539B, Deferrari, pp. 386–90, for love of neighbour considered in light of the command to love the neighbour as yourself.

<sup>51</sup> On the world as 'Book' see my study, 'Book and Word: The Victorine Background of Bonaventure's Use of Symbols', in *S. Bonaventura 1274–1974*, ed. by J-G. Bougerol, 5 vols (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1973–74), II, 143–69, especially pp. 145–62.

<sup>52</sup> Even in a work like *De vanitate mundi* (On the vanity of the world), Hugh can write with affective prose about enjoyment of the world, its beauty, and pleasures, while also writing, especially in Book I, about tragedy, human loss, and pain. For enjoyment of the world, see *De vanitate mundi*, II, PL, CLXXVI, cols 718C–719C; CSMV, pp. 179–80.

tively within the bounds of philosophy underscores the Victorine appreciation of the world as a positive place, however much human enjoyment of it may be tempered, misdirected, and disordered by bodily infirmities, concupiscence, and alienation from God.<sup>53</sup> Although there are passages in which ‘love of the world’ is given an immediate negative qualification by Hugh, such as the opening section of *De archa Noe*,<sup>54</sup> and the numerous references to the disorder/tumult/flood of the world in that work, this negative love of the world, and the ‘flood’ of the world, are rooted in ‘cupidity’ which is, quite simply, *disordered* love. Thus, *De substantia dilectionis* is yet another reminder in Hugh’s writings that makes it quite clear that there is a positive, beneficial love of the world, and that this love plays a fundamental role in human existence.

A second spiritual treatise in which the proper attitude toward the created world, including the dynamics of a gradually realized perception that there is a properly ordered love of the world as well as a disordered love of it, comes to the fore is *Soliloquium de arrha animae*.<sup>55</sup> Written in the form of a dialogue between *H* (to be taken as ‘Hugh’, following Poiriel in his introduction, text, and translation) and *A* (Soul), this work was, in the words of Rudolph Goy, Hugh’s ‘bestseller’, with 323 surviving manuscripts of the work. Indeed, it was one of the most popular religious works written in the twelfth century, with an increasing number of manuscripts surviving from each century through the fifteenth.<sup>56</sup> Translations into French, Italian, Catalan, Flemish, German, and Norse are found in medieval manuscripts, and a printed edition of the Latin appeared in 1473.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Didascalicon*, II. 20–27, PL, CLXXVI, cols 759C–763B; trans. Taylor, pp. 74–79.

<sup>54</sup> *De archa Noe*, I.1, ed. by Sicard, pp. 4–5, ll. 29–63; PL, CLXXVI, cols 619/620; CSMV, pp. 46–47.

<sup>55</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 951–70; *L’Oeuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor*, I, ed. by Hugh B. Feiss and Patrice Sicard, trans. by Dominic Poiriel, Henri Rochais, and Patrice Sicard, intro. and notes by Dominic Poiriel, *Sous la Règle de saint Augustin*, 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), pp. 211–300 (this Latin text replaces that of Karl Müller). English translation: Hugh of St. Victor, *Soliloquy on the Earnest Money of the Soul*, trans. and intro. by Kevin Herbert, *Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation*, 9 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1956).

<sup>56</sup> Goy, *Die Überlieferung*, pp. 505–06, for ‘bestseller’ and comments on significance of number of manuscripts in light of other authors and works; pp. 277–329, manuscript listing; pp. 328–29, summary data and comments.

<sup>57</sup> For translations and printing, see *De arrha animae*, in *L’Oeuvre*, I, 213, and Goy, *Die Überlieferung*, pp. 501–04.

The *Soliloquy*, which is actually an internal dialogue between ‘Hugh’ and his ‘Soul’, concerns the nature of love.<sup>58</sup> Immediately, Hugh, the participant, perceives the dialogue as a very private, even intimate, revelation of deepest longings. Affirming that love is the prime motivation in human life with the declaration to Soul that ‘I know that love is your very life and that without love you cannot exist’,<sup>59</sup> ‘Hugh’ goes on to probe for Soul’s deepest yearnings by asking what she loves above and beyond all else. The Soul admits that she has learned by hard experience that neither the world nor the self offer adequate objects for love. For, ‘a love of this world is ephemeral and deceptive, an affection which I must always abandon when what I have chosen passes away, or change when something more pleasing surpasses it.’<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the self provides a poor and inadequate object of love. Self-love is ‘a certain solitary and miserable delight’ that has forsaken humanity and ‘the comforts of society’.<sup>61</sup>

Following Soul’s admission of frustration in searching for an adequate and enduring object of love, ‘Hugh’ suggests that Soul has an unseen Bridegroom who has left a magnificent betrothal-gift, a pledge of love for his beloved. This betrothal-gift is the world, created to serve human beings and to witness to the Bridegroom’s love. One may take pleasure in the world, may delight in it, but only with the realization that the things of the world are gifts, ‘the presents of a friend, the bounty of a lord’, who is to be loved. The world is loved ‘for his (God’s) sake’. He is to be loved ‘through and above’ the world.<sup>62</sup>

Moved by the evidence of the betrothal-gift that she should love above all other things the Bridegroom she has never seen, the Soul nevertheless soon comes to lament her state. She does, indeed, love him with a singular love, but, alas, she must share the pledge of his love (the material world) even with infidels and criminals.<sup>63</sup> The dialogue continues with ‘Hugh’ using his best gifts of persuasion

<sup>58</sup> For the *Soliloquium* as an internal dialogue, see Sicard Poirel, ‘Introduction’, in *L’Oeuvre*, I, 212.

<sup>59</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, PL, CLXXVI, col. 951C; *L’Oeuvre*, I, 226–27; trans. Herbert, *Soliloquy*, p. 13.

<sup>60</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, PL, CLXXVI, col. 953A; *L’Oeuvre*, I, 228–29; trans. Herbert, *Soliloquy*, p. 14.

<sup>61</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, PL, CLXXVI, col. 953C; *L’Oeuvres*, I, 230–31; trans. Herbert, *Soliloquy*, p. 15.

<sup>62</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, PL, CLXXVI, cols 954C–956A; *L’Oeuvre*, I, 234–39; trans. Herbert, *Soliloquy*, pp. 16–18.

<sup>63</sup> *Soliloquium de arrha animae*, PL, CLXXVI, col. 957D; *L’Oeuvre*, I, 244–45; trans. Herbert, *Soliloquy*, p. 20.

to convince his soul that the world is not only a gift, but also a ‘beautiful’ gift that signifies how much the unknown Bridegroom cares for her and will ultimately provide for her. Finally convinced, the soul relishes the gift of the material world and the pledge of a greater future gift. Couched in the nuptial imagery that was entering more and more into religious discourse with eleventh- and twelfth-century commentaries on the Song of Songs, *Sololiquium de arrha animae* is witness to the loving attention Hugh could bring to the material world and to the essential, unavoidable place that it must play in the relationship of humans and the divine. As a Book, as a Tree, as a Word, as a Form inscribed upon the body of Christ in the Ark diagram, or as a Pledge/Betrothal Gift, the world is one mode of the outpouring of God’s love through his Wisdom in Creation. What humans make of that outpouring reveals the nature of individual human love in its relation to divine love and loving the divine. Not flight from the world but a realization and perception of the world of matter as mediator of spiritual realities and an upward leading ‘guiding hand’ is the true Victorine attitude — ‘minding matter’.



# BROKEN MIRRORS: ABELARD'S THEORY OF LANGUAGE IN RELATION TO THE AUGUSTINIAN TRADITION OF REDEEMED SPEECH

Willemien Otten

## *Communication in a Twelfth-Century Context*

In today's Dutch universities the question of keeping up scholarship in a diversity of traditional fields of the humanities is causing serious problems. This is not to say that these fields are beyond criticism. The study of national languages is tied in some way to the rise and fall of the nation-state, now overtaken by globalization, which may explain why German and French culture attract dwindling numbers of students, even as the interest in English and Spanish is stable, if not increasing. In a related manner the study of theology, which has been my home department for the past decade, has seen its student body fluctuate; this complicates its traditional partnership with various churches. The downward trend of fewer ministry students as a result of secularization is remedied only partly by the amorphous interest in religious studies, as this field lacks the well-defined curriculum and homogeneous student body of the past. If we contrast the decline of such traditional areas with the rise of new fields like theatre or film studies, we have a genuine problem on our hands, for these subjects attract students by the hundreds, even though the majority of them will never be able to find a job either in film or in theatre. This is not to deny the legitimacy of such newly developing fields, as they take the media, the visualization, and digitalization of Western culture quite seriously. We can make similar comments about communication studies, where the dubious tendency to cater to spokespersons and spin doctors, most of whom tend to valorize form above content, is counterbalanced by the earnest need to control the fast pace of the media, the vortex quality of which can so distort one's message that it becomes totally lost.

How does Peter Abelard feature in the above scenario? When I survey the contemporary humanities curriculum for the kinds of subjects that he would have liked to teach, the field of communication comes to mind. That is not to say that he could not find a home in linguistics, as his theories would rival with the Chomskys and Austins of this world. Alternatively, he might want to find himself in philosophy, teaching logic or ethics, and even in theology, teaching the history of Christian thought or systematic theology, as long as he was not put under magisterial control, the latter not because he would object to it but because the chances that he would get hired are slim. The evident focus on language as the common currency of all the humanities is what deeply connects Abelard's disparate interests, which makes it hard to think that he would be found outside this area. Having said this, it seems that his classroom performance mattered more to him than his choice of discipline, for it is the regular meeting of the minds between a professor and his students that gave rise to many of his ideas. Unlike some contemporary colleagues, Abelard would welcome student evaluations, as they would generally not fail him, with the students responding positively both to his energy level and, especially, his communicative style.

Communication then for Abelard is about teaching as well as performance. If we next put him back in his historical context, it must be made clear from the start that twelfth-century communication cannot take place without the presence of the divine as somehow inspiring and validating it. More than his intellectual predecessor Anselm of Canterbury, with whom he is usually contrasted, Abelard sets out to reflect explicitly upon what God's presence in the communicative process entailed, that is, whether any other discourse than prayer and meditation could be used. His is a new art of doing theology, in which teaching and performance converged in a typical early scholastic manner. What he tries to put forward through the writing of his theological works is a recalibrated conceptualization of theology whose distinctive profile is that it absorbed and internalized the structural human need for communication.

While I do not wish to belittle the role of Scripture to Abelard, his interest in language and theological communication ranges far beyond the exegetical.<sup>1</sup> At the same time we cannot explain the fabric of his arguments by subsuming

<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere I have elaborated on Abelard's personal connection to Scripture: see my 'In Conscience's Court: Abelard's Ethics as a Science of the Self', in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by István P. Bejczy and Richard G. Newhauser (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 53–73 (pp. 60–61), and especially 'The Poetology of Biblical Tragedy in Abelard's *Planctus*', in *Poetry and Exegesis in Premodern Latin Christianity*, ed. by Karla F. L. Pollmann and W. Otten (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 245–62.

them under the general rubric of scholastic thought, as the professional and academic makeover of theology in the late twelfth and thirteenth century. His melancholy sadness, his insight into what Peter Cramer has brilliantly referred to as the twelfth century's 'sense of falling short' are all too prominent for such a claim to be true.<sup>2</sup> To grasp Abelard's complexity, it is best to situate him at various important junctions, always unsure about where to turn next exactly: to exegesis or philosophy, to reason or authority, to faith or despair. His remarkable self-consciousness, so often overlooked by those who prefer to see him as a rational Voltaire battling the zealous St Bernard, leads me to trace his mental attitude in this article back to Augustine and his views on language and communication. As is well known, Abelard is much more often, and with good cause, compared to Boethius.<sup>3</sup> But Augustine's shadow may well be longer than that of Boethius, especially in light of Abelard's desire to anchor theological language in divine Redemption before it can serve as an adequate vehicle of (theological) communication. For this reason the comparison between Augustine and Abelard may have greater 'aperitive' value in demonstrating the complexity of reading Abelard to a contemporary audience. Not only can this comparison show to us on which junctions Abelard actually found himself and to which epistemological 'interstate highways' he may have wanted to get access, but before all it helps us understand the quintessential Augustinian theological quandary in which he found himself, namely that none of these, however carefully selected, could put him on the road to heaven.

My thesis in this article is that in the manner and style of his theological teaching Abelard is both heir to and critic of the Augustinian tradition of redeemed speech and of dialogue between God and the self. For both thinkers, moreover, the Incarnation of the Word proves to be a central topic in conditioning the process of redemption, infusing all other theological themes. Naturally, there are great differences between them as well. Whereas Augustine did not like to teach, perhaps projecting the unhappiness suffered in the classroom of his youth onto his subsequent unhappiness as a professional teacher, Abelard clearly did, with the difference in temperament between them solidifying into a

<sup>2</sup> See Peter Cramer, *Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages c. 200–c.1150* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 221–66.

<sup>3</sup> See Eileen Sweeney, *Logic, Theology, and Poetry in Boethius, Abelard, and Alan of Lille: Words in the Absence of Things* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) pp. 63–95. Sweeney complements her philosophical analysis of Abelard, in which she pays ample attention to Boethius, with a sophisticated analysis of his *planctus* or laments.

conceptual difference about the possibility and feasibility of communication, both on the horizontal, intersubjective level and with regard to the divine. If we add to this their difference in theological method and professional ambience, my title of 'broken mirrors' becomes gradually clear, as the Augustinian reflection in Abelard, however important, is by nature a fractured one.

### *Augustine on Language as Vehicle of Redemption*

As Marcia Colish has argued in her book *The Mirror of Language*, Augustine is an author whose interest in language is directly tied to his theological goal of redemption.<sup>4</sup> To make a long story short, the story which her book puts forth so elegantly and eloquently, the basis for this Augustinian hope for redemption lies in the expression of the divine Word through the Incarnation. Through and in the act of Christ's Incarnation the divine Word became a human person, thereby effectively entering historical time and place and becoming involved in the course of history, even if the end of history had already been decided. Through and in the Incarnation, the divine Word did not only adopt or embrace the entire created world but chose to communicate explicitly with humanity through Christ's preaching of the Gospel. As a consequence of their having received this Gospel, so Augustine through Colish, Christians actually speak a different language than non-Christians. They use — or ought to use at least, for reality always falls short of one's ideals — redeemed speech in a kind of proleptic fulfilment of the final union of God and humanity.<sup>5</sup>

Interestingly enough, however, as an aside on which Colish does not elaborate, Augustine treats that final union never as one of speech or language. He rather symbolizes it by sight, as illustrated by his well-known idea of a beatific vision, or by touch, as in his description of his mystical meeting with Monica in the garden at Ostia.<sup>6</sup> The difference between redeemed speech and the final beatific vision or mystical contact with God makes clear that for Augustine all human speech, however redeemed, is still imperfect, that is, as long as it relies on the idea of temporality in the restricted sense of sequential time: saying one thing after another.

<sup>4</sup> See Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge*, 2nd rev. edn (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

<sup>5</sup> See Colish, *Mirror of Language*, pp. 8–81.

<sup>6</sup> See Augustine, *Soliloquiorum libro duo*, I.VI.12–13, ed. by Wolfgang Hörmann, CSEL, 89 (1986), pp. 19–21, for the idea of a beatific vision and *Confessions*, IX.10.24, ed. by Lucas Verheijen, CCSL, 27 (1981), pp. 147–48, for the touching on eternal wisdom.

The concatenation of arguments, the responding voices in dialogue, the train of thought built up in a monologue or soliloquy are all based on executing a series of consecutive steps. By needing to go through such steps, the human use of language bears with it the risk that one will forgo the actual goal of redemption even as one strives to bring it about. Only in liturgy does it seem possible to overcome this, and thus we find Augustine contrasting the sequence of experience and thought in the *Confessions* with the unity of their simultaneous presence in the mind, as when singing the hymns of St Ambrose.<sup>7</sup> The uniqueness of the Incarnation is precisely that it unites the temporal and the eternal, thus setting the model for how redeemed speech should result in their actual connection.

In view of the discursive nature of teaching, Augustine's negative classroom memories take on new meaning. I already stated that he did not like his own days in school, just as at a later stage he did not enjoy being a teacher himself. Different circumstances can be adduced to explain this, varying from the fact that as a boy he was physically beaten in school to the fact that as a teacher he was unable to keep his class under control. Be that as it may, there may well be a deeper reason for Augustine's uneasiness with teaching, having to do with his discovery of and chosen concentration on reading rather than on speaking. As Brian Stock has argued in *Augustine the Reader*, Augustine was the first Christian author who conceptualized his conversion as one based explicitly on reading a text rather than on hearing the Gospel spoken.<sup>8</sup> This is nicely captured by the comparison between the conversion of St Antony and St Augustine. Having read a Latin version of Antony's life by Athanasius, Augustine knew that Antony had converted upon hearing the Gospel reading of the rich young man, just as he was walking past a church with its door ajar. In Book VIII of his *Confessions* Augustine is evidently impressed when reading about Antony's conversion upon hearing the Gospel, a story which he recounts there among a number of miniature conversion narratives. Building up suspense, they climax in the story of his personal conversion with the famous episode of *Tolle, lege* (Pick up and read). But what a difference there is between their respective cases: Augustine the bishop who will write over five million words and Antony the model saint lodged in a desert cave, as a kind of pre-Abelardian Paraclete.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See on this M. Burcht Pranger, 'Time and the Integrity of Poetry: Ambrose and Augustine', in *Poetry and Exegesis in Premodern Latin Christianity* (see n. 1, above), pp. 49–62.

<sup>8</sup> See Brian Stock, *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 75–112.

<sup>9</sup> On the centrality of Scripture and the difference between Antony and Augustine in receiving it, see Charles Hallisey, 'The Surprise of Scripture's Advice', in *Religious Identity and the*

To pursue the comparison between Antony and Augustine for a moment, it is interesting that in his *On Christian Doctrine*, effectively Augustine's major work on teaching and composed around the same time as the *Confessions*, he states that reading the Bible is primarily needed to instruct others, thereby valorizing his pedagogical choice in this work to make exegesis the basis of all Christian teaching.<sup>10</sup> Desert fathers like Antony would themselves not ever need to read the Bible according to Augustine, as they were actually living the Gospel. This peculiar observation allows for an important connection to Stock's major argument in the book that is the sequel to *Augustine the Reader*, namely *After Augustine*. It also brings us closer to a sense of the difference between Augustine and Abelard.

In this latter study Stock holds Augustine responsible for the Western practice, one that endures even through the Enlightenment era, of reading as a kind of therapeutic and meditative practice, a sort of spiritual self-help.<sup>11</sup> This meditative aspect of Augustinian teaching resonates with the advice Augustine is known to have given his students upon occasion, namely not just to read books but to be by themselves, just thinking.<sup>12</sup> He obviously wants books, among which especially the Bible, not just for consumptive use but to serve as tools facilitating the encounter between God and the self. In consequence, Augustine's concept of teaching drives his students ultimately down a one-way street, or better perhaps, onto a roundabout. For in good Platonic fashion his approach seems only indirectly that of a teacher, as his concept of teaching entails that he will first and foremost try to get his students to read for themselves.

Concerning the further details of what we might call Augustine's absentee position on teaching, it is clear that the Bible is his central text. In fact, Augustine has developed a hermeneutics in which all textual interpretation is condensed to become ultimately co-extensive with biblical interpretation. In the way it is set out in his *On Christian Doctrine*, biblical interpretation does emphatically not factor

*Problem of Historical Foundation: The Foundational Character of Authoritative Sources in the History of Christianity and Judaism*, ed. by J. Frishman, W. Otten, and G. Rouwhorst (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 28–44.

<sup>10</sup> See Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.39.43, ed. by Joseph Martin, CCSL, 32 (1962), p. 31: 'Homo itaque fide et spe et caritate subnixus eaque in concusse retinens non indiget scripturis nisi ad alios instruendos. Itaque multi per haec tria etiam in solitudine sine codicibus vivunt.'

<sup>11</sup> See Brian Stock, *After Augustine: The Meditative Reader and the Text* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), pp. 8–23.

<sup>12</sup> See Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), p. 120, with references to *Contra academicos*, 11.7.17, and *De ordine*, 1.3.6.

in the liturgical veneration of the Bible as a sacred text. Instead it refers to a much broader hermeneutical process, whereby the reading and interpreting of all texts, including of the world as text, becomes viewed through the lens of the Bible. Much as the Bible itself remains one book among others to be read and interpreted, through this hermeneutical process its role becomes magnified at the same time by being asked to serve as the general standard of all interpretation: literary, natural, and philosophical.

How then does the concept of Augustinian teaching bring out his notion of Incarnation and of redeemed speech? For Augustine the Bible is far more than a text to be interpreted, it is itself redeemed speech, the voice of God in writing in the same way as Creation is his alphabetical utterance in matter. Somehow the Bible seems to follow rather than to precede the fact of the Incarnation, about which it also tells us. Despite its unique claim to possess revelatory status, the very physicality of the biblical text as text symbolizes for Augustine the general inadequacy of any created medium to reveal divine omnipotence. Thus the Bible is always in need of interpretation.

And yet, as the central text to be taught and interpreted Augustine succeeded in moving the Bible forward to become the centre of an educational corpus which after him, as evidenced by Stock's *After Augustine*, expands quickly and massively, even if not all teaching transcends its Augustinian focus, remaining fixated on the traditional and unattainable goal of divine union. Yet while Augustine has allowed the notion of biblical teaching to expand almost *ad infinitum*, to the degree that all the liberal arts with their own range of non-Christian canonical authors and texts could legitimately be included in the exegetical process, and hence became channelled into the Middle Ages, we find him building in an important caveat at the same time. With the divine Trinity identified as the only *res* to be enjoyed even if it remains unattainable in this life,<sup>13</sup> it is only through signs (*signa*) that we can approach God, who is both the author and the final object of all knowledge. It is with signs, among which words as verbal signs form a special category, that the study of the Bible should preeminently occupy itself.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, 1.5.5, ed. Martin, p. 9: 'Res igitur quibus fruendum est, pater et filius et spiritus sanctus eademque trinitas, una quaedam summa res communisquae omnibus fruuntibus ea, si tamen res et non rerum omnium causa, si tamen et causa. Non enim facile nomen quod tantae excellentiae conveniat, inveniri potest, nisi quod melius ita dicitur trinitas haec unus deus, ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia.'

<sup>14</sup> Hence Colish's interest in sign theory throughout her treatment of Augustine. See Colish, *Mirror of Language*, pp. 8–81.

Augustine leaves us with enormous problems here in terms of theological communication, not just in the sense of teaching but also in the sense of the communication of grace by means of the Sacraments, a theme that falls outside the scope of the present article. What is particularly remarkable about Augustine's teaching of signs, as argued recently by Phillip Cary, is that, whereas in traditional Platonism external and sensible signs conventionally indicate intelligible things, in Augustine the order is reversed: only once we know the thing can we begin to understand the meaning of the sign as sign. The proper interpreter of Scripture is one who already knows the spiritual meaning of Scripture and therefore is not a slave of its literal meaning.<sup>15</sup> Approaching the matter from that angle, we can conclude that perhaps Augustine could indeed afford to fail as a teacher. Taking solace in the wisdom of the desert fathers, to whose exegetical ignorance he attributes a preeminent rather than a privative quality, we become aware of how Scripture is always teaching and communicating itself, based as it is on the Incarnation, with its liturgical effect of actualizing the eternal in the temporal.

### *From Augustine to Abelard*

Augustine set in motion a long tradition of meditative reading. As I indicated, Brian Stock has recently tracked the course of this history which goes from Augustine through Anselm of Canterbury and the monastic tradition, leading us into the teaching of Hugh of St Victor. The latter's Augustinian legacy is quintessentially summarized in his *Didascalicon*, a kind of twelfth-century sequel to *On Christian Doctrine*, in which — very interestingly — he lists Augustine and other patristic writers as books in the biblical canon, more specifically as part of the New Testament.<sup>16</sup> But where does Abelard fit into this developing story? Here it is somewhat of a hindrance that, whereas we know with relative certainty that Abelard loved his teaching, which puts him in opposition to Augustine and makes him more akin to the contemporary communications professor, we do not know what his teaching actually entailed. As Jacques Verger explains, we know little about Abelard's schools other than that his teaching was largely meant for clerics, although it may have been privately conducted for paying students, and that it was

<sup>15</sup> See Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self: The Legacy of a Christian Platonist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 143.

<sup>16</sup> See *Didascalicon*, IV.2, ed. by Charles Henry Buttner, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin*, 10 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1939), p. 72, ll. 9–14. On the impact of Hugh see Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

not entirely autonomous, as some kind of *licentia docendi* seems already to have been necessary.<sup>17</sup> Yet there was no sharp control over its contents.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, teaching seems to have been the one constant factor in the development of Abelard's restless career, for even as a monk at St Denis he continued to be engaged in it. Thus dwelling on Abelard's teaching practice may well offer us a more stable historical approach to the insights of his mind.

At the height of his success and before his fall on account of Héloïse, Abelard was teaching both in logic (*dialectica*) and in exegesis and theology,<sup>19</sup> the term *theologia* being one which he himself coined to indicate the summary of Christian doctrine that he wanted to provide for his students. Although due to the problems regarding the dating of his works — there is especially the question of whether the logical works are to be seen as preceding the theological ones or not — there is an interest in separating Abelard's theological from his logical works,<sup>20</sup> it is my opinion that by doing so we seriously risk failing to notice his relationship to Augustine. I see the Augustinian strand in his work as an important and structural subcurrent of Abelard's theory of persuasion which for him, just as for his famous predecessor, was somehow linked to the effectiveness of the Incarnation of the divine Word. In the concrete context of Abelard's teaching, however, the precise effect will not only turn out to be different from its role in Augustine, which is partly due to the particular classroom experience involved in Abelard's teaching, but also from later scholastic practice. In what follows I will try to explain what I consider unique about Abelard's position on the Incarnation, concentrating particularly on the oral and performative nature of his teaching.

### *Abelard on Teaching Theology*

Before doing so, however, we have to pause to look for a moment to what is no doubt one of the finest classroom scenes that have come down to us from the Middle Ages, and told by Abelard himself in the *Historia calamitatum*. Combative

<sup>17</sup> See Jacques Verger, 'De l'école d'Abélard aux premières universités', in *Pierre Abélard: Colloque international de Nantes*, ed. by Jean Jolivet and Henri Habrias (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), pp. 17–28.

<sup>18</sup> See Verger, 'De l'école d'Abélard', p. 22.

<sup>19</sup> See Verger, 'De l'école d'Abélard', pp. 19–20.

<sup>20</sup> For a typical view of this separation, see L. M. de Rijk, 'Peter Abälard (1079–1142): Meister und Opfer des Scharfsinns', in *Petrus Abaelardus (1079–1142): Person, Werk und Wirkung*, ed. by R. Thomas (Trier: Paulinus, 1980), pp. 125–38. See also John Marenbon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 94–95.

already as a young man, Abelard decided early on to exchange the weapons of the military for the armour of logic. Far from curbing his irascible temper, this decision only motivated him to engage in substantial dialectical combat with Roscelin of Compiègne. His next opponent after coming to Paris was the Notre Dame logician and theologian William of Champeaux, whom Abelard forced to modify his position on universals, after which William forced him out of his classroom. It is only at this point, and so at a relatively mature age, that Abelard becomes interested in undertaking the study of theology, transferring to Laon to attend the lectures of the well-known Master Anselm. Together with his brother Ralph, Anselm of Laon had built up the reputation of its cathedral school beyond anything the town had ever seen. In Abelard's view, however, as I begin to follow the drift of how this incident is recounted in the *Historia*,<sup>21</sup> Anselm taught him nothing but disappointment, displaying a 'remarkable command of words, but their meaning was worthless and devoid of all sense'.<sup>22</sup> Full of wit as was his style, for he was already a trained dialectician, Abelard quickly begins to lose interest in his master's lectures, adding insult to injury by being conspicuously absent from the class. Here we have the absentee student rather than the absentee teacher. Abelard's classmates quickly begin to play their own part in this miniature classroom drama by asking him, the slightly older and more mature student who is a newcomer to theology, if he thinks that he can perhaps do a better job. To their astonishment he answers in the affirmative. Having already professed that any one can study Scripture with the aid of a commentary, thereby disqualifying the role of the master in good Augustinian fashion as essentially superfluous,<sup>23</sup> he is ready to accept the challenge implied in his fellow students' questions and agrees to act as their teacher. The students select a difficult passage from the prophet Ezekiel on which they ask him to comment. Much to their surprise, Abelard consents to do so immediately.<sup>24</sup> Wishing to protect their fellow student's reputation or

<sup>21</sup> See *Historia calamitatum*, ed. by J. Monfrin, 2nd edn (Paris: Vrin, 1962), pp. 68–69, ll. 164–221. I have used the translation of the *Hist. cal.* in *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, ed. by Michael Clanchy, trans. by Betty Radice (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), pp. 62–64.

<sup>22</sup> See *Hist. cal.*, ed. Monfrin, ll. 169–70: 'Verborum usum habebat mirabilem, sed sensum contemtibilem et ratione vacuum.' It is hard not to think back of a very similar disappointment experienced by Augustine when he at last came to meet the famous Manichaean teacher Faustus; see *Confessiones*, v.3.3–vii.13.

<sup>23</sup> See *Hist. cal.*, ed. Monfrin, p. 68, ll. 192–95; 'but that I found it most surprising that for educated men the writings or glosses of the Fathers themselves were not sufficient for interpreting their commentaries without further instruction': trans. Radice, p. 63.

<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, the text of Abelard's commentary on Ezekiel has not been preserved. In the opening of his *Hexameron* commentary Abelard calls Genesis, which recounts the history of

simply trying to prevent this joke from getting out of hand, the students advise him to defer his lecture by a few days, so that he can prepare adequately. Yet Abelard insists that he will lecture only the very next day, adding indignantly: 'it is my custom to proceed through talent [*ingenium*] rather than tradition [*per usum*].'<sup>25</sup> Abelard's impromptu class is such an overnight success that Anselm gets him expelled from town, apparently fearing to lose all his students to this new competitor.

Generally this incident is taken as indicative of a larger teaching revolution that gets under way in the early twelfth century. This involves a historical paradigm shift of *longue durée* that has to do with the fact that an intellectual transition from merely reciting *auctoritates*, often in a monastic setting, to actually being able to receive them and work with their viewpoints as building blocks in the construction of one's own theological position, was badly needed. This general process is often seen as culminating in the various rules for critical historical scholarship elaborated by Abelard in the Prologue of the *Sic et non*. Leaving this larger paradigm shift aside, I want to point out two striking pedagogical moves in the above scene as representing two concrete innovations; these underlie Abelard's teaching method but also lay bare its vulnerability. First, when challenged by his fellow students Abelard famously states that he wants to work *per ingenium* and not *per longevum usum*, for which latter model Anselm (of Laon) apparently served as his straw man. Second, and related to this, there is the interesting fact that Abelard wishes to work directly with primary texts. Whereas he claims a kind of historical interest, not only is he not prepared or able to do so in the text's original language but he appears not even really interested in it. In the incident recounted, we only read that he is conducting an interpretation of the prophet Ezekiel in Latin. More important for my purpose than these two individual features, however, is the larger conclusion that the correct interpretation of what is actually going on hinges on the kind of relationship in which master and student(s) find themselves involved.

If we try to extrapolate from this in order to define Abelard's pedagogical practice more precisely, it seems fair to say that for Abelard (a) academic progress will arise most often from the direct application of *ingenium* to any theme or topic, be it a biblical text as in the Ezekiel passage or a religious figure, as when he

divine Creation (*operatio*), the Song of Songs, and the first and last vision of the prophecy of Ezekiel the three most difficult passages of the Old Testament. According to Jerome, these books were in the Jewish tradition to be read only at the priestly age of thirty. See *Expositio in Hexaemeron*, in PL, CLXXVIII, col. 731A–B.

<sup>25</sup> *Hist. cal.*, trans. Radice, p. 63; 'Indignatus autem respondi non esse mee consuetudinis per usum proficere sed per ingenium': ed. Monfrin, p. 69, ll. 207–09.

challenges the legend that Dionysius — the founder of the monastery of St Denis at which he was a monk — could have been a pupil of St Paul.<sup>26</sup> Although my next two claims may admittedly be more difficult to substantiate, it seems equally fair to say that if *ingenium* is to work properly (b) the chemistry of a classroom situation is an important factor in allowing traditional knowledge to become actualized, and (c) the traditional evidence route through the use of the commentary tradition is a detour with which Abelard wants to dispense.

### *Abelard's Teaching as Incarnational Theology*

At first sight these three aspects of Abelard's pedagogical practice, especially when combined, may seem to confirm his well-known scholarly reputation as a hasty and highly inflammatory intellectual, an impression which is confirmed by his recounting of the incident with Anselm of Laon. But the question is whether, in this instance, we are not taking his jocular and agonistic character too seriously. Rather than pursuing this defiant line of approach and ending up with a Voltaire-like Abelard, let me at this point make a connection with an interesting Abelardian comment on effective teaching found in the early *Theologia 'Summi boni'*. By allowing us to link his pedagogy to the theme of Incarnation, this comment may allow us to open up the comparison with Augustine in a new way.

In *Theologia 'Summi boni'* (II.18–19) we find Abelard making the following statement:

And unless he instructs the mind from within, whoever teaches shall merely be mouth-  
ing air on the outside. How else can it be explained that, while the words of a certain  
teacher are equally carried to the ears of different people, they are not equally under-  
stood by them, unless the inner master who teaches whom he wants even without a word,  
is close to some, but minimally present to others? About the wisdom of this Master it is  
written: *Wisdom shall not enter a malevolent soul nor shall it dwell in a body repressed by  
sins* [Wisdom 1. 4].

And this did not escape the philosophers, who thought that the knowledge of God  
ought to be acquired not by reasoning but by living well and urged us to strive for it more  
by conduct than by words.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> More precisely, Abelard challenges the statement that Dionysius the Areopagite was Bishop of Athens, based on a claim he found in Bede's *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* that he was Bishop of Corinth. See *Hist. cal.*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 89–91, ll. 941–81; trans. Radice, pp. 85–86.

<sup>27</sup> See *Theologia 'Summi boni'*, II.18–19, in *Opera theologica III*, ed. by Eligius M. Buytaert and Constant J. Mews, CCCM, 13 (1987), pp. 119–20: 'Qui nisi mentem instruat interius, frustra qui docet aerem uerberat exterius. Quid est enim quod, cum alicuius doctoris uerba equaliter

In comparison to Augustine, whose notion of interior master known from *De magistro* is played upon here, the view put forth by Abelard here seems rather different, the reason possibly being — but this is obviously my conjecture — that it is rooted in concrete classroom practice. What Abelard is saying here is that not everybody is actually able to understand good teaching, but only those who are truly instructed from within. Yet the interior instructor referred to here is not the Christ known from Augustine, offering him a transcendent foundation of revealed knowledge with which to replace Plato's anamnesis theory. Abelard rather zooms in on a general sense of morality here, shared by pagan philosophers and Christian saints alike, without which one cannot begin to understand divine teaching. Scratching the surface of the text even further, perhaps we can simply equate the epistemological dimension to which his statement refers with inborn intellectual talent, in short, with *ingenium*.

If we want to make the link between Abelard's interior instructor and the Christ of tradition more explicit, it appears that for Abelard the truth of the Incarnation is so far-reaching that he considers all good knowledge in retrospect to have been identical with Christian knowledge. In contradistinction to Augustine's sense of Incarnation, he does not seem to think that in order for good pagans to count they should first be whitewashed as anonymous Christians. Rather, given that good pagans can have the same moral antenna and equal intellectual talent as good Christians, Abelard considers the line between Christians and non-Christians as coterminous with the line between truth and incomprehension of truth. This means that all good teaching by that very fact qualifies as Christian teaching for Abelard, as in his mind the line between truth and incomprehension of truth is apparently drawn irrespective of one's formal allegiance to either Christian or pagan, that is, philosophical truth.

Seeing the matter in this way can help us to make sense of some oddities of Abelardian reasoning, such as his peculiar exclamation that he would prefer to live among the Saracens rather than staying with his unruly monks in the monastery of St Gildas in Brittany,<sup>28</sup> for they tried to poison him while he served as abbot

ad aures diuersorum perferuntur, nec tamen equaliter ab eis intelliguntur, nisi quod quibusdam presto est interior magister, quibusdam minime, qui quos uult etiam sine uerbo docet? De huius quidem magistri sapientia scriptum est: *In maliuolam animam non introibit sapientia nec habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis* [Sap. 1. 4]. Quod nec ipsos latuit philosophos, qui noticiam dei non ratiocinando, sed bene uiuendo acquirendam censebant et ad eam moribus potius quam uerbis nitendum esse suadebant.'

<sup>28</sup> See W. Otten, 'Authority and Identity in the Transition from Monastic to Scholastic Theology: Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux', in *Religious Identity and the Problem of*

there. Again, whether that poison story is historically accurate — just as the incident with Anselm of Laon — is less relevant than the fact that this is how he wishes to present it to us, as his rhetorical skills make him conveniently combine the account of Socrates' martyrdom with a poison story drawn from Gregory the Great's *Life of St Benedict*.<sup>29</sup> Where Abelard the teacher pushes the bounds of redemptive language much further than Bishop Augustine would ever do is when he takes the universal pedagogical effect of the Incarnation to mean that the Saracens are better Christians indeed than his very own monks, that is, provided that they possess the required intellectual talent.

The view that all good teaching is Christian teaching squares nicely also with the Preface of the *Theologia scholarium*, which may reach well beyond a mere topical introduction on precisely this point, while giving us at the same time more insight into the problems that can arise from this kind of classroom philosophy. As Abelard makes clear, his students convinced him that his talent — again, a leading role for *ingenium* here — was much better equipped to understand either divine Scripture or the reasons of the sacred faith than that it could exhaust the wells of the philosophical abyss, as this was what he was actually teaching them. Obviously interested in getting the most out of this stellar teacher, the students added that they did not want him to conclude their course in philosophy unless he would also finish this study of God, to whom it is fitting to relate all things.<sup>30</sup> In other words, he should teach them theology instead of philosophy. Picking up where his students left off, Abelard continues by saying that the secular arts had apparently been used by the faithful so far only to solve preparatory questions. Since Christian faith was wrapped in more difficult questions these days, it now needed a more sophisticated rational defence against its detractors.

Behind the conventional rhetorical schema of *captatio benevolentiae*, it is clear that what Abelard really wants to do in this work is to solve difficult questions

*Historical Foundation* (see n. 9, above), pp. 356–57, with reference to *Hist. cal.*, ed. Monfrin, pp. 97–98, ll. 1221–25, 1229–34; trans. Radice, p. 94.

<sup>29</sup> See Otten, 'Authority and Identity', pp. 356–57, with reference to *Hist. cal.*, ed. Monfrin, p. 106, ll. 1501–07; trans. Radice, p. 102.

<sup>30</sup> See *Theologia scholarium*, Preface 1–4, in *Opera theologica III*, pp. 313–14. See especially Preface 2: 'Cum enim a nobis plurima de philosophicis studiis et secularium litterarium scriptis studiose legissent et eis admodum lecta placuissent, uisum illis est ut multo facilius divine pagine intelligentiam siue sacre fidei rationes nostrum penetraret ingenium quam philosophice abyssi puteos, ut aiunt, exhausisset. Addebant etiam nec me aliter philosophie cursum consummare nec ad eius peruenire metam aut aliquem ex ea me fructum colligere, nisi eius studium in deum, ad quem omnia referri conuenit, terminarem.'

about (human and divine) knowledge per se! For this reason the distinction between valid and non-valid truth claims ranks as most urgent, as he will relegate the question of whether such items have a pagan or a Christian origin to a position of secondary importance altogether. Interestingly, mitigating the oral bravura of his *ingenium*, Abelard makes a rather self-conscious comparison with Augustine's *Retractations* here, which underscores the difference in educational mentality between them quite nicely. For whereas Augustine, whom I have so far qualified only as a writer and a reader, uses his *Retractations* as a remarkable *teaching* opportunity by prescribing the correct understanding of his texts, thus guarding them diligently and guiding others to follow their exact development, Abelard's Preface is not at all what one might expect from an experienced Voltaire-like teacher writing a foreword to a best-selling textbook. Instead, what we have here seems more like the first step of a timid and self-conscious intellectual, whose classroom reputation, depending as it did on instant chemistry, had not yet translated in an equally commanding writing style.<sup>31</sup> His references to possible heresy, furthermore, are more a sign of literary uncertainty than an attempt to deflect possible accusations of unorthodoxy, even if such rebukes would soon come to haunt him.

To summarize the similarity and the difference between Abelard and Augustine, one might say that whereas Augustine accepts the fact of the Incarnation as the coincidence of *res* and *signum*, relegating all subsequent language to the metaphorical realm of sequential time and transforming theology into an age-long programme of exegetical *exercitatio mentis*, Abelard sees the Incarnation in more universal but also more contingent human terms as yielding the possibility of concrete overlap between *res* and *verbum*,<sup>32</sup> meaning that all speech, Christian as well as pagan, logical as well as metaphorical utterances, can in theory become transformed into redeemed speech through the (oral) performance of a talented teacher.

<sup>31</sup> See *Theologia scholarium*, Preface 5–8, pp. 314–15, with reference to Augustine's *Retractations* in Preface 7, p. 315. See especially Preface 8: 'Tanti itaque uiri (scil. Aug.) instructus exemplo, si qua forte per errorem proferam, nulla in his per contentionem defendam aut per elationem presumam, ut si nondum ignorantie uicio caream, heresis tamen crimen non incurram. Non enim ignorantia hereticum facit sed magis superbe contentionis obstinacia, cum quis uidelicet ex nouitate aliqua nomen sibi comparare desiderans, aliquid inusitatum proferre gloriatur quod aduersus omnes importune defendere nititur, ut uel ceteris superior uel nullis habeatur inferior.'

<sup>32</sup> See on this W. Otten, *From Paradise to Paradigm: A Study of Twelfth-Century Humanism* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 176: 'Abelard's simultaneous interest in logic and metaphor can be traced back to a single root, namely the mystery of Christ as being both *res* and *verbum* at the same time.'

Approaching Abelard's well-known locus on the Incarnation as found in his *Commentary on Romans* in the above suggested manner yields a rather different picture than most conventional readings of this argument.<sup>33</sup> Abelard's logic of love, to cite the title of one major study,<sup>34</sup> is often seen as his personal response to Anselm's satisfaction theory. The argument runs something like the following. Whereas Anselm focused on the 'objective' necessity of the Incarnation, as the God-Man figure provides us with the only fitting remedy to the *gravitas* of human sin, in Abelard we find a more 'subjective' approach, supposedly proceeding through persuasion rather than logic. While it is true that God has endless possibilities of redemption at his disposal, the very fact that he chose to become human himself demonstrates such great and humble love, even resulting in death, that it cannot fail to kindle a similarly loving response on the part of humanity.<sup>35</sup> The problem that I have with this approach is twofold. First, I object to the kind of Schleiermacherian view of subjectivity permeating the concept of Christian faith that seems to speak from this evaluation.<sup>36</sup> This can be tied to a larger historiographical picture in which the twelfth-century renaissance is seen as weary of the feudal rigidity of Anselm's satisfaction theory and much more optimistic, almost naively so, about the reform potential of education.<sup>37</sup> Based on my

<sup>33</sup> Abelard's locus on the Incarnation, which is more properly seen as a question on redemption and justification, is found in his *Commentaria in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, II (III.26), in *Opera theologica* I, ed. by Eligius M. Buytaert, CCCM, 11 (1969), pp. 117–18.

<sup>34</sup> See R. E. Weingart, *The Logic of Divine Love: A Critical Analysis of the Soteriology of Peter Abelard* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

<sup>35</sup> See, e.g., *Readings in Christian Thought*, ed. by Hugh T. Kerr, 2nd edn (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), p. 94: 'Abelard's most important legacy to the history of doctrine is his dismissal of Anselm's theory of the atonement and his own so-called moral influence theory. Arguing that Christ's death was not so much a forensic satisfaction of God's affronted honor as a supreme manifestation of God's love, Abelard was subjective and personal rather than objective and legalistic in his view.' Margaret R. Miles, *The Word Made Flesh: A History of Christian Thought* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), contrasts Abelard's psychological redemption with Anselm's legal account of redemption (p. 153).

<sup>36</sup> See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, intro., trans., and notes by Richard Crouter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 18–39. I refer particularly to Schleiermacher's definition of religion as a feeling of absolute dependance, as exemplified in the First Speech, pp. 77–95.

<sup>37</sup> On this reform potential in Alain de Lille's idea of a New Man see Gillian R. Evans, *Alan of Lille: The Frontiers of Theology in the Later Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 133–65. For a keen eye of Abelard's intermediate position, see C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe*,

analysis of Abelard, this is not how I would interpret the more complex and at times fraught character of twelfth-century pedagogical culture. Second, I object to the fact that what is demonstrably new in Abelard's view of the incarnate Christ, namely his role as teacher, is often not afforded any separate value but primarily regarded in terms of its soteriological importance, insofar as his death fulfils and cancels this teaching almost at the same time. Here I think we overlook the double universality of Christ's Incarnation, as Abelard makes the teaching of the incarnate Christ the explicit basis of Trinitarian theology.<sup>38</sup> The fact of the Incarnation allows him (Abelard and Christ, it is hard to tell them apart) to reach out to the entire world, including the Saracens, with a message combining infinite love with universal truth in a seamless union.

### *Abelard between Augustine and Calvin: Concluding Remarks*

I have attempted to argue that Augustine and Abelard see the Incarnation of the divine Word with its inherent connection between divine and human speech as the root metaphor for both the theory and practice of Christian teaching. For Augustine the primary emphasis is on faith and the spread of it. With respect to knowledge, it is most important for him that all knowledge be centred in and filtered through biblical interpretation, the hermeneutical application of which serves as a prime instrument to instruct others. Desert fathers like Antony do not need to read the Bible, as they live a life of faith already, but bishops like Augustine need to unify the church and prevent dissension, a programme which eventually resulted in the Christianization of Western culture. With Abelard we

950–1200 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), p. 236: 'There is a profound connection between Abelard's life and the general tendencies in the schools of the time. An entire system of education was caught in a conflict between a traditional kind of teaching that tended towards the acquisition of human qualities and a new kind that tended towards knowledge and rational inquiry.' One can see Abelard's theology of Incarnation as an attempt to keep these together.

<sup>38</sup> Abelard roots his distinction between the different names of the Trinity in Christ's own teaching. See *Theologia Christiana*, I.1, in *Opera theologica II*, ed. by Eligius M. Buytaert, CCCM, 12 (1969), p. 72: 'Summi boni perfectionem, quod Deus est, ipsa Dei sapientia incarnata Christus Dominus describendo tribus nominibus diligenter distinxit, cum unicum et singularem, indiuiduam penitus ac simplicem substantiam diuinam Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum tribus de causis appellauerit: Patrem quidem secundum illam unicum [...] potentiam; Filium [...] secundum [...] propriae sapientiae discretionem [...]; Spiritum Sanctum [...] secundum illam beniginitatis suae gratiam.' Cf. *Theologia 'Summi boni'*, I.1.1–I.2.1, p. 86.

have now reached an age where the implicit incarnational foundation of faith-based Christian knowledge is ready to move outside the stable monastic context where it had found refuge after the fall of the Roman Empire. As a result of this, there arises the need to have Christian belief explicated in an overt teaching philosophy, as the scholastic counterpart to the monastic service programme *docere verbo et exemplo*.

For the profoundly intellectual Abelard, the only viable teaching philosophy was to take biblical knowledge as knowledge in context, that is, as knowledge embedded in the corpus of the liberal arts through which it was transmitted, and reconfigure this entire linguistic corpus in such a way as to steer clear of cluttered reception issues and ease one's students into the broader questions of true or untrue, right or wrong. In short, it was his aim to introduce them to all matters philosophical and theological.

Whatever the enormous advantages of this approach for the universal expansiveness of Abelard's theological teaching programme, it is clear that there are difficulties as well. But they are neither the kind of intellectual glitches that we find Abelard cited for when he is accused of heterodoxy, nor the scholastic developments by which later theological programmes would become compartmentalized, comparable to the way in which, to put it in Thomistic terms, the programmes of the *Summa theologiae* and the *Summa contra Gentiles* would increasingly grow apart and break up in smaller units of questions rather than discursive arguments. If we have to conclude that Abelard has failed in his universal teaching programme, this failure is to be located on a much deeper level than the accusations of heterodoxy with which he was confronted during his lifetime or the extraordinary challenge he put to human language by making it serve as the single vehicle of communicating both divine grace and human sin as two sides of the same theological narrative. If his failure can be pinpointed at all, it has to do with the risk that he takes in seeing incarnational teaching resulting in an intersubjective human process of universal learning by which Redemption can ultimately be the result of one teacher's unusual talent.

The failure of this approach becomes clear towards the end of the *Theologia scholarium*, where Abelard struggles extensively with the problem of predestination and providence without ever coming to a satisfactory conclusion.<sup>39</sup> Here the intersubjective inspiration through which the Incarnation arouses the teacher's performance comes to a grinding halt as the teacher may teach the words of Christ

<sup>39</sup> See W. Otten, 'Fortune or Failure: The Problem of Grace, Free Will and Providence in Peter Abelard', *Augustiniana*, 52 (2002), 353–72.

as much as he wants and also follow his moral example, as Abelard consistently avowed to do, but still has to admit that he cannot control actually receiving the gift of Redemption as gift. Thus, at the end of all theological debate and dialogue, we find the individual struggling to face his guilt *coram deo* in Abelard. Rather than the long shadow of Augustine, perhaps Abelard is close here to a proto-Calvin, afraid to find himself locked in an eternal labyrinth at the end of which the consolation of divine grace beckons as forever unattainable.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> On the importance of the labyrinth for John Calvin, see William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 69–109.



## VOCATIVE VERB, SUBSTANTIVE VERB: PERFORMATIVE OR FACT-STATING?

Mary J. Sirridge

Constructions involving the vocative verb, like (1) He is called Socrates (*iste vocatur Socrates*), and (2) I am named Priscian (*Priscianus nuncupor*) have certain well-known peculiarities.<sup>1</sup> Both (1) and (2) are completely correct, whereas (3) Priscian writes (*Priscianus scribo*) is ill-formed, and (4) He is read Virgil (*iste legitur Virgilius*) is not parallel in meaning to (1), if indeed it says anything at all. Moreover, 'Socrates' and 'Priscian' in (1) and (2) are not in a normal referential position. To borrow a modern example,<sup>2</sup> even if (5) Giorgione was called 'Giorgione' because of his size is true, (5\*) Giorgione was called 'Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco' because of his size is not true, though the two names are co-referential.<sup>3</sup> And similarly, even though Priscian was the author of the

<sup>1</sup> In my title, 'vocative verb' refers to all forms of verbs that are used to express what someone is named or called by; 'substantive verb' refers to all forms of the verb for which the infinitive is 'to be', including forms used as auxiliary verbs or to express existence. Translations are mine throughout.

<sup>2</sup> W. V. O. Quine, 'Reference and Modality', in *Reference and Modality*, ed. by L. Linsky (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 17–34, especially p. 18 (first publ. in *From a Logical Point of View* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 139–57). The example from which Quine starts is 'Giorgione was so called because of his size'.

<sup>3</sup> The *Absoluta cuiuslibet*, attributed to Petrus Hispanus (non-papa), offers a similar example; 'iste dicitur albus denominative ab albedine' is true, though 'iste dicitur candidus denominative ab albedine', even though 'candidus' and 'albus' signify the same thing (p. 20): H. C. Kneepkens, *Het Iudicium Constructionis: Het Leerstuk van de Constructio in de 2de helft van de 12de eeuw*, 4 vols (Nijmegen: Ingenium, 1987), I: *Een Verkennde en Inleidende Studie*, II: *Uitgave van Robertus van Parijs*, 'Summa "Breve sit"' (= SBS); III: *Uitgave van Robert Blund*, 'Summa in arte grammatica' (= SAG); IV: *Werkuutgave van Petrus Hispanus (non-papa)*, 'Summa "Absoluta cuiuslibet"'

*Institutiones grammaticae*, we cannot infer from the truth of (2) the truth of (2\*) I am named Author of the *Institutiones grammaticae* (*Auctor 'Institutionum grammaticarum' nuncupor*). Intuitively this is because such contexts are not simply about the Italian painter and the grammarian, but about their names.

To some extent the peculiar syntax of *vocor* and the like resembles that of the substantive verb, but there are differences as well. On the one hand, (6) I am Socrates (*Socrates sum*) and (7) Socrates is man (*Socrates est homo*), with their nominative complements, are acceptable.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, there is something wrong with 'I am named I' (*ego nominor*), although 'I am' (*ego sum*) is technically acceptable, albeit probably redundant.<sup>5</sup>

Again, (8) Socrates is (*Socrates est*) is perhaps acceptable, if it means that Socrates exists, though 'Socrates is called' (*Socrates vocatur*) looks incomplete. Another difference is that forms of 'to be' can be used with participles to form the passive past tenses, which is clearly not true of 'I am called' (*vocor*) and the like. Finally, it looks as if we can freely substitute 'the teacher of Plato' for 'Socrates' in its various occurrences in (6), (7), and (8) without a change of truth-value in the surrounding sentence.

It seems to be very likely that the idiosyncrasies of construction of the vocative verb have to do with what it means, that is to say, with semantic matters. For example, (1) seems to mean something different in kind from the reportative (9) Socrates is called by him (*Socrates vocatur ab illo*). This reports an action; Socrates

(= *Absoluta*). This example is slightly more problematic than the 'Giorgione' example, as 'albus' and 'candidus' are not obviously precisely co-extensive in reference, are not singular referring expressions, and are adjectival nouns referring to accidental properties. Also common as examples are variants of the argument that from 'iste vocatur Socrates', 'iste vocatur iste homo' does not follow, even if 'iste homo' is used to pick out the same individual as 'Socrates': *Absoluta*, p. 20; *SAG*, p. 47; *SBS*, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> As Kneepkens notes, Priscian and his descendants usually assume that in a sentence like 'Priscian nominor' the proper noun is not the subject of the sentence, which is furnished by the pronoun implicit in a personal verb, but a nominative complement of the verb; we thus have a deep structure of [S[NP[pron. Ø] [VP[V sum] [NP Priscianus]]]] ('Robert Blund and the Theory of Evocation', *English Logic and Semantics from the End of the Twelfth Century to the Time of Ockham and Burleigh*, ed. by H. A. Braakhuis, C. H. Kneepkens, and L. M. de Rijk (Nijmegen: Ingenium, 1981), pp. 59–97, especially p. 65). The same is true, *mutatus mutandis*, of 'Priscianus vocor'. And indeed, in terms of medieval grammatical theory, 'Priscianus sum' and 'Priscianus vocor' would be ungrammatical if 'Priscianus' were understood to stand *a parte ante*, i.e., as the subject of the verb, and not *a parte post*, i.e., as complement, since what pulls a noun from third person to first person (*evocat*) must precede it grammatically in the sentence, regardless of the spoken word order.

<sup>5</sup> *Ego sum* can, of course, be used emphatically to say, 'That's me!' But in this case *ego* has become a predicative expression.

is being summoned in some way or other. Of course, (9) might well be about language — in the ordinary way, Socrates would be summoned by using language, for example by using a proper name like ‘Socrates’; but he could also be summoned with an expression like ‘Hey you!’ or by a prearranged flag signal or something of the kind. By contrast, (1) is a claim specifically about the relationship between language and reality; intuitively speaking, it says that somebody or something has a particular name.

There is a natural impulse, strengthened by late medieval theories of material supposition and by twentieth-century philosophical theories of meaning and reference, to explain examples like (1) by saying that they are not first-order claims about properties and entities of the real world, but rather are second-order claims about language. On this view, (1), if it expresses a proposition at all logically speaking, is a sentence of the metalanguage which says that a uniquely designating expression of the object language is assigned to an individual in the object language semantic domain.

If we turn to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, however, we find a different intuition at work, the intuition that having-a-name is an attribute of real individuals in the world and that ascriptions of names are ordinary sentences of the object language. No one supposes, of course, that having-a-name (*vocatio*) is an attribute just like being white or human; clearly (1) states some sort of institutional fact.<sup>6</sup> Now this object language intuition may well turn out to be too costly metaphysically to hang onto. It may turn out in the end that institutional facts about what things are named are more peculiar and intractable than other institutional facts, and that they therefore require drastic semantics. That remains to be seen. But we need first to have an analysis of what it is to be or to have a name. And if recent discussions in analytic philosophy have taught us anything, it is that what it is to be or to have a name is not a very easy question to answer.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Proper names can, of course, reflect attributes and relations of things they name, as ‘Giorgione’ and ‘Barbarelli da Castelfranco’ do; but whether a name does this or not is itself a matter of institutional choice and convention.

<sup>7</sup> The twentieth-century literature on singular referring expressions is extensive. There are, however, two main positions. (1) The names of natural language are somehow attached to the individuals they name by way of associated descriptions; the name is a definite description in disguise (Russell), or the name has meaning or sense composed of descriptions (Frege), or the name can be used to refer to an individual because of a cluster of descriptions or a descriptive backing that attaches it to a given individual (Strawson, Searle). (2) The names of natural languages are attached to individuals; and they would describe exactly that same individual in any possible world, even if the individual named had dramatically different properties (Kripke). For

There is a strong tendency among twentieth-century logicians and linguists to distinguish sharply between the 'is' of existence in (8), the 'is' of predication in (7), and the 'is' of identity in (6). There is also a strong tendency to suspect that 'is', particularly in sentences like (8), and perhaps in (6) and (7) as well, is not really a referring expression of the object language at all. (8) (Socrates exists) says that 'Socrates' is not an empty name, that Socrates is not nothing, or that there is exactly one element *a* of the object language domain such that *a* socratizes; (8) is thus really a sentence of the metalanguage. In (6) and (7) 'is' is part of the logical machinery of the language and expresses overlapping of predicates, not itself being an object language predicate of any kind.

Among medieval linguistic theorists there is some disagreement about what the substantive verb means, and thus about exactly what constructions of 'to be' (*esse*) are paradigm uses of the substantive verb,<sup>8</sup> but forms of 'to be' (*esse*) are

a general discussion of the history of the debate, see William Lycan, *Philosophy of Language* (New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 35–71.

<sup>8</sup> Forms of *esse* occur in a variety of constructions: (1) Socrates is (*Socrates est*) (existence); (2) Socrates is man (*Socrates est homo*) (predication); (3) This man is Socrates (*iste homo est Socrates*) (identity). Many modern theorists following in the tradition of Frege and Russell take these occurrences of 'is' to be 'so different as to have nothing whatsoever in common'. See Barry Miller, 'Existence', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existence>> [accessed June 2008]. For most medieval linguistic theorists (1) and (2) are related usages of a single verb, with one or the other paradigmatic and the others derivative; (3) usually is taken to fall under (2). Abelard, *Super Periermeneias* (= *Sup. Per.*), in *Peter Abaelards Philosophische Schriften I: Die Logica 'Ingredientibus'*, ed. by B. Geyer, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, 21 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1927), pp. 307–503, especially pp. 360–63, takes both (1) and (2) to be basic. See Constant J. Mews, 'Aspects of the Evolution of Peter Abaelard's Thought on Signification and Predication', in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains, aux origines de la 'Logica modernorum'*, ed. by Jean Jolivet and Alain de Libera (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1987), pp. 15–41; Klaus Jacobi, 'Peter Abelard's Investigations into the Meaning and Functions of the Speech Sign 'est'', in *The Logic of Being: Historical Studies*, ed. by Simo Knuuttila and Jaakko Hintikka, Synthese Historical Library, 28 (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1986), pp. 145–80. For Petrus Helias, *Summa super Priscianum* (= *SSP*), ed. by Leo Reilly, 2 vols (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993), pp. 508–09, *esse* properly signifies 'substantiam a substando', substance as the substrate of forms; and thus (2), from which (3) is not distinguished, is the primary instance; he avoids discussing (1). For Gilbert of Poitiers, *esse* properly signifies *subsistentia*; thus (1) is primary. See C. H. Kneepkens, 'Grammar and Semantics in the Twelfth Century: Petrus Helias and Gilbert de la Porrée on the Substantive Verb', in *The Winged Chariot: Collected Essays on Plato and Platonism in Honour of L. M. de Rijk*, ed. by M. Kardaun and J. Spruyt, Brill Studies in Intellectual History, 100 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 237–75; Marcia L. Colish, 'Gilbert, the Early Porretans, and Peter Lombard: Semantics and Theology', in *Gilbert*

normally understood as forms of a single verb,<sup>9</sup> whose syntactic idiosyncrasies have to do with the fact that unlike other verbs, what it attributes to its subject is neither an action nor a passion.<sup>10</sup> There is also widespread acceptance of the view that whatever its signification or function in a sentence, the vocative verb says something about something in the real world, as other verbs do, and thus is normally significant as part of the object language.

For medieval linguists, the intuition that (1) (He is called Socrates) and the like are about real things and their attributes is considerably reinforced by reading the *Institutiones grammaticae* of the sixth-century grammatical 'authority', Priscian,<sup>11</sup> who nearly always discusses 'I am called' (*vocor*) together with 'I am' (*sum*) and says twice that the substantive verb and vocative verb 'have similar force' (*similem vim habent*). If the substantive verb is an objective language predicate attributing something or other, no matter how eccentric, to entities in the object language domain, and if the vocative verb has similar force, then surely it too functions in the object language.

The object language approach does not dictate a single pattern of analysis. By the time of the thirteenth-century commentaries on Priscian's *Institutiones*

*de Poitiers et ses contemporains*, pp. 229–50; Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, ed. by A. J. Vanderjagt, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 41, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994), I, 131–48; L. O. Nielsen, 'On the Doctrine of Logic and Language of Gilbert of Porreta and his Followers', *Cahiers de l'Institut du moyen âge grec et latin* (CIMGL), 17 (1976), 4–69.

<sup>9</sup> This is no doubt partly due to the theories and practice of Aristotle, who does not recognize the Frege-Russell ambiguity and instead distinguishes different senses of the verb *is*. See Jaakko Hintikka, 'The Varieties of Being in Aristotle', in *The Logic of Being* (see n. 8, above), pp. 81–114. Priscian's authority is in play as well; by substantive verb he seems simply to mean forms of the verb *esse*, even when used to form the passive past tense as in 'visus est'.

<sup>10</sup> An exception of sorts is to be found among grammarians discussing the use of *est* in such sophismata as 'est dies' and 'sillogizantem ponendum est terminos', some of whom think that *est* signifies a certain 'departure out of inactivity into act' (*exitus ab otio in actum*); the suggestion is rejected in Roger Bacon, *Summa gramatica*, in *Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi*, XIV, ed. by Robert Steele (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), pp. 91–94. See Mary J. Sirridge, 'Can *est* be Used Impersonally: A Clue to the Understanding of the Substantive Verb', *Histoire Epistemologie, Langage*, 12, fasc. 2 (1990), 121–38.

<sup>11</sup> Priscianus, *Prisciani grammatici Caesariensis, Institutionum grammaticarum, libri XVIII* (= *IG*), ed. by Martin Hertz, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1855–59; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1961), Books I–XVI are known as *Priscian maior*, and Books XVII–XVIII are known as *Priscian minor*. For a review of points of Priscian's approach and the medieval tradition, see C. H. Kneepkens, 'The Priscianic Tradition', in *Geschichte der Sprachtheorie*, III: *Sprachtheorien in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. by Sten Ebbesen (Tübingen: Narr, 1995), pp. 239–64.

by Jordanus<sup>12</sup> and Robert Kilwardby<sup>13</sup> (1) (He is called Socrates) and (6) (I am Socrates) are understood in a simple, straightforward manner as stating different facts; and the idea that the two sentences in some sense mean the same thing has been more or less given up in favour of the weaker thesis that they have a certain logical similarity that results in similar syntax. But if we look to twelfth-century works in grammar, we find a variety of other kinds of accounts of constructions like (1) and (6) which attempt to work out the idea that there is some common core of meaning between the two kinds of verbs. These include both exotic analyses of the fact-stating sort and accounts, which are quasi-performative.

In this paper, I want first to describe briefly Priscian's meandering treatment of the substantive verb and the vocative verb. I will then summarize briefly the approach taken by thirteenth-century literal commentaries like those of Jordanus and Robert Kilwardby, as contrasted with the approach of earlier treatments, most strikingly exemplified by Robert Blund's *Summa in arte grammatica*. In general, with respect to Priscian's insistence that 'I am' and 'I am called' have 'similar force' (*similem vim habent*), we will see that the theoretical stress shifts from an understanding of the similarity in question in terms of common content or performance of the same sort of speech act to the view that verbs like 'I am called' and 'I am' have different meanings which — for different semantic reasons — have some similarities of syntax.

### *Priscian: Institutiones grammaticae*

Priscian's discussions of the vocative verb consist of a series of loosely related observations and digressions of dubious consistency with the usual admixture of portentous silences and wayward examples. Priscian's remarks do, however, tend to focus on the various ways in which a particular group of verbs — 'I am called' (*vocor*), and 'I am named' (*nominor*, *nuncupor*), and the like — by and large behave grammatically like the important verb 'to be' (*sum*). The principle discussions are found in Book VIII ('On the Verb') and in sections 33–37 and 74–78 of XVII ('On Construction').

<sup>12</sup> Jordanus, *Notulae super Priscianum minorem* (= NPM), occurs in five manuscripts. I have used Leipzig Universitätsbibliothek, MS 1291, fols 1<sup>r</sup>–96<sup>r</sup>. Partial edition ed. by Mary J. Sirridge, *CIMGL*, 36 (1980). The commentary was previously incorrectly attributed to Jordan of Saxony.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Kilwardby, *Commentary on Priscian minor* (= CPM), MS P = Cambridge, Peterhouse College, MS 191, fols 112<sup>r</sup>–229<sup>v</sup> (= codex 191, vol. II, fols 1<sup>r</sup>–118<sup>v</sup>); MS O = Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 119, fols<sup>r</sup> 11–124<sup>r</sup>. I follow the P text throughout.

In Book VIII, section 51, Priscian has concluded his discussion of simple verb tenses, and now turns his attention to tensed forms that are formed by ‘cognition’, for example, ‘I have been loved’ (*amatus sum*). The overarching topic is which verb forms can be said to express something complete or perfect. The specific question is why ‘is’ (*sum*) can signal the perfection of an action. Generally speaking, Priscian answers, actions are completed over time, which ‘churns along in its path like a river’, so that the present is no more than the seamless intersection of past and future. The present tense thus always signifies past, present, and future; as I say, ‘I am writing down a verse’, the action referred to by the verb is partly already done, and partly yet to be completed (*IG*, VIII.52). The exception is ‘is’ he says, ‘which is the most perfect of all, to which nothing is lacking’. His idea, it seems, must be that bare being just is what it is homogeneously over time; at any time when something exists or obtains, it does so completely. Thus ‘is’ expresses perfection or completeness, so that when it combines with the past participle, it can produce a reference to a past action as perfected or completed; it does the job of the past perfect (*officium fungitur praeteriti perfecti*; *IG*, VIII.51). Verbs like ‘am called’ (*vocor*) and the like have a similar force, he adds (*similem huic vim habent*; *IG*, VIII.51). He does not explain, but it seems that his idea must be that like being or obtaining, having or being a name is not a process, but a state that is complete and perfect if it obtains at all.

Other prominent discussions occur in Book XVII (‘On Construction’), the first of the two final books of the *Institutiones*, which are devoted to the discussion of syntactic structures. In sections 33–37, in the course of discussing interrogatives, Priscian is discussing the connection between certain question-and-answer forms; his discussion is structured by the assumption that we can determine what a question means by looking at the information furnished by the appropriate answer, and vice versa. He notes that ‘who’ (*quis*) is used to ask a question both with the substantive verb and with *verba vocativa* described as ‘having similar force’. ‘Who is called Trypho?’ (*quis vocatur Trypho?*) or ‘Who is Trypho?’ (*quis est Trypho?*) demands a personal pronoun like ‘he’ (*ille*) as an answer because the form of the question presupposes that, having in mind Trypho’s properties, we use the name associated with those properties to find out which individual it is who has those properties (*IG*, XVII.33). By contrast, if we ask, ‘What is he called?’ (*quis vocatur ille?*) or ‘Who is he?’ (*quis est ille?*), we expect an answer like ‘Trypho’; we have a certain individual with various properties in mind and want to know who the individual is or what his name is.

After a rambling discussion of questions like ‘Who is walking?’ (*quis ambulat?*) Priscian abruptly notes a difference between the substantive verb and the vocative

verb: although nouns can be combined with both, the situation is different with pronouns, for no one says ‘I am called I’ (*ego nominor*) or ‘You are called you’ (*tu vocaris*). The reason, he says, is that the ‘<im>position of proper names’ signalled by *vocor* and the like does not attach to the personal pronoun, ‘though the <referent of the> substantive verb does inhere in things as named’ — something’s being called by a name implies that it exists, but not the other way around. It is thus not surprising that these verbs have differing syntax, he says, since verbs ‘with different power’ call for differing constructions, as we can see by noting that it is peculiar to verbs of willing to enter into constructions with the infinitive, as in ‘I want to read’ (*volo legere*) and ‘I desire to know’ (*cupio scire*).<sup>14</sup>

Further on (XVII.74–82) Priscian is discussing *evocation*, the power of pronouns to draw nouns, which are essentially in the third person, into agreement with a first or second person verb, so that ‘I, Priscian write’ (*ego Priscianus scribo*) is acceptable, though constructions like ‘Priscian write’ (*Priscianus scribo*) are simply ill-formed. It occurs to him at this point that there is an important exception to this rule, for obviously ‘I am pious Aeneas’ (*sum pius Aeneas*) and ‘I am called Cicero’ (*Cicero nominor*) are well formed, though no pronoun occurs in the sentences (IG, XVII.76). This leads him to a further reflection: personal pronouns are not interchangeable with nouns in such constructions, for no one, he says, would say ‘I am I’ (*ego sum*) or ‘I am called I’ (*ego vocor*). This, he reasons, is because what such verbs express is the proper substance of *anything whatsoever* or the fact of *anything whatsoever*’s having-a-name. The personal pronoun makes

<sup>14</sup> IG, XVII.35, p. 130: ‘Et nomini quidem tam substantiva quam vocativa adiunguntur verba, pronomini vero tantum substantiva, quia in his quae nominantur, inest substantivum, ut “Trypho sum” vel “Trypho vocor”. Non tamen substantivis, quae sunt pronomina, inest propria positio nominum, id est verba vocativa; nemo enim dicit “ego nominor” vel “tu vocaris” vel “ille nuncupatur” ad pronomen referens verba, quomodo “Trypho nominor” vel “Cicero vocaris”, “Virgilius nuncupatur” bene dicimus. nec mirum, diversa potestatis verba diversis convenire constructionibus cum voluntaria (id est affectiva) quoque videmus solere infinitis adiungi, ut “volo legere”, “cupio scire”, “studio discere”.’ This is a vexed passage; and medieval commentators are well aware of the problems. ‘Substantivum’ is obviously used both for the substantive verb and for noun and pronoun; ‘hiis quae nominantur’ seems to refer to things named where we would expect a claim about things that name. In his literal commentary, Jordanus offers three different glosses of the passage; see *NPM*, ed. Sirridge, p. viii. In his literal commentary, Kilwardby offers two different readings of the passage: (1) “quia in hiis que nominantur”, id est in significationibus nominum, “inest substantivum”, id est substantia per substantive verb designata, and (2) ‘per hoc enim quod dicit “quia in hiis que nominantur”, intendit quod ipsis verbis vocativis significantibus nominationem “inest <substantivum>”, scilicet secundum constructionem verbi substantivi’ (*CPM*, fol. 132<sup>vb</sup> (= 20<sup>vb</sup>).

the same reference. 'I' (*ego*), for example, already makes a reference in a general way to anything whatsoever as speaker. Thus the subject would be twice picked out in the same completely general way in '(I) am Priscian' (*ego sum Priscianus*) or '(I) am called Priscian' (*ego vocor Priscianus*), and so no personal pronoun is necessary in 'I am Priscian' (*sum Priscianus*) or '(I) am called Cicero' (*Cicero nominor*) (*IG*, XVII.78). He concludes:

It is therefore clear that these verbs, because they express the imposition of proper names, are able to draw them [*scil.* names] out of third person and into first person, as when I say '(I) am Priscian' [*Priscianus sum*] or '(I) am called Cicero' [*Cicero nominor*], because *the substantive verb* or *vocative verb* has within itself [a reference to] the particular substance the pronoun would also single out if it were added. (*IG*, XVII.79)<sup>15</sup>

The, notoriously cryptic and episodic, character of Priscian's account in no way discouraged medieval commentators from trying to extract a consistent theory from his remarks. Three recognizable emphases emerge. (I) Priscian surely says in the discussion of *evocation* ('I Priscian write'; *ego Priscianus scribo*) that the substantive verb and vocative verb make some kind of reference to existing as the individual subject of properties (*specialem substantiam*); he may also be saying that both kinds of verb are somehow connected to having a proper name (*impositio nominum*). Indeed, in this discussion he seems almost to identify existing as a subject and having-a-proper-name. Such a near-identity of meaning would, of course, explain the mysterious 'similar force' to which he refers in the discussion of 'Who is Trypho?' (*quis est Trypho?*) 'Who is called Trypho?' (*quis vocatur Trypho?*). (II) If we combine (I) with the treatment of verb tenses formed by cognation (*IG*, III.51), where Priscian again makes mention of 'similar force', it is tempting to think that he is claiming that the common core of meaning has to do with the fact that both kinds of verb make reference to some special,

<sup>15</sup> *IG*, XVII.77–78, p. 152: 'Supradictis vero, id est substantivis, et sine pronomine bene omnes adiunguntur personae et vocativis verbis. cum enim ipsa verba per se substantiam uniuscuiusque propriam colligant vel substantiae nominationem, necessario relictis pronominibus, quae ipsa quoque substantiam quantum ad vocem solam significant, ad nomina se applicant, quae propriam qualitatem demonstrant, ut "homo sum", "Apollonius vocor"; unde "ego sum" vel "ego vocor" per se nemo dicit, cum duplicata substantiae demonstratio sine qualitate nihil perfectum significaret. non erat enim possibile propriam positionem quae significatur nomine proprio, attribuere voci communi, id est ad omnes generaliter pertinenti, quod est pronomen, si diceremus "ego sum", "ego nominor", verba ad pronomen referentes [...] manifestum est igitur, quod quia continentur suam positionem nominum supra dicta verba, id est nominationem, evocant ea a tertia ad primam, quando dico "Priscianus sum" vel "Cicero vocor", cum specialem substantiam, quam pronomen additum demonstraret, habeat in se ipsum substantive verb vel vocativum.'

complete fact, that is, so that the common meaning is here a matter of having the same content. (III) Priscian also notes that these two kinds of verbs in fact have ‘diverse powers’, as we see if we try to replace ‘Priscian’ in ‘I am named Priscian’ (*Priscianus nuncupor*) with ‘I’. This is exactly what we should expect intuitively speaking, since ‘am’ and ‘am called’ are not completely identical in meaning — otherwise we should have to suppose that there was nothing before things got their name and that every name names an existent. Not surprisingly, Priscian notes that since they have a different power, then their syntax is not precisely the same.

One corollary of the search for a common element of meaning in *sum* and *vocor* is that it becomes extremely unlikely that anyone will simply rule that (1) and (2) are not really object language propositions; after all, (6), which is supposed to have ‘similar force’, is clearly fact-stating. If there is any oddity about (1) and (2), then, it will have to be due to some peculiarity of the nominative complements ‘Priscianus’ and ‘Socrates’, either to some referential peculiarity of these expressions in themselves or to a special way in which they combine with or complement the substantive verb and vocative verb.

### *The Thirteenth-Century Commentators*

By the time of the thirteenth-century literal commentaries on Priscian by Jordanus and Robert Kilwardby it is the combination of complement with verb that is the focus of interest. According to Jordanus, the ‘similar power’ of the substantive verb and vocative verb amounts to their having similar syntactic potential (*similem vim construendi*),<sup>16</sup> which comes from the fact that both were instituted to ‘collect’ or ‘connect’ (*colligere sive copulare*) a subject with something else, either with a form or with the name of a form. Thus they both take a nominative complement, to which they both attach themselves as matter attaches itself to form.<sup>17</sup> Here already it is obvious that the two verbs have different meanings; the substantive verb signifies being (*esse*) according to Jordanus, and the vocative verb

<sup>16</sup> *NPM*, fol. 18<sup>vb</sup>: ‘Proponit ergo primo quod in verbis substantivis et vocativis ex parte post construuntur nomina et in hoc habent similem vim construendi.’

<sup>17</sup> *NPM*, fol. 36<sup>db</sup>: ‘Ista verba colligunt per se, id est, cum ex inventione sua nata sunt colligere sive copulare substantiam [...] et nota quod dicit “colligunt” quia ista verba copulant principaliter sive uniunt formam illi cuius forma, ut verba substantiva, vel nomen forme, ut vocative verb [...] verba substantiva et vocativa relictis pronominiibus applicant se ad nomina sicut materiale applicat se ad formam.’

signifies having-a-name (*nominatio*); still, even if being substance is one thing and naming substance is another, he says, the vocative verb can still be said to signify substance ‘purely with the expectation of the proper form’ (*mere sub expectatione propriae formae*), just as the substantive verb does, because it is no more complete until the name is supplied than matter is complete without form.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, in his discussion of questions and their appropriate answers, taking his cue from Priscian’s notorious claim that ‘the substantive verb is somehow contained in the vocative verb’ (*quia in his quae nominatur inest substantivum*), Jordanus labours to preserve the idea that the two kinds of verb have overlapping meaning because the meaning of the substantive verb is included in that of the vocative verb, though not the other way around; this is because something’s having-a-name presupposes its having being (*esse*); a thing has to have some form to start with before getting a name imposed by way of or on the basis of the form,<sup>19</sup> since names are imposed on the basis of uniquely identifying qualities.

Robert Kilwardby, also commenting on Priscian’s account of evocation (*IG*, XVII.75), says that in evocation the thing that evokes (*evocans*), which is not-determinate (*infinitem*) pulls something else to itself in order to become more determinate.<sup>20</sup> The substantive verb signifies substance in a general way; but in ‘I am Priscian’ (*Priscianus sum*) and ‘I am man’ (*homo sum*) that ‘pure substance’ signified by ‘to be’ is qualified or determined by the various ‘qualities’ associated with proper or common noun, so that these sentences express information about who I am in particular or about what kind of thing I am. The vocative verbs also signify in a general way; they signify having-a-proper-name in a general way; ‘I am called Priscian’ says what my name is in particular.<sup>21</sup> ‘I am’ (*ego sum*) is

<sup>18</sup> *NPM*, fol. 36<sup>vb</sup>: ‘Verba adiectiva non significant mere (mere *om.* L) sub expectatione formae; significant enim esse in certa persona contractum et non contrahendum, ut “lego”, “sum legens”. Et propter hoc nominativis non sunt extra addenda sicut verba substantiva et vocativa.’

<sup>19</sup> *NPM*, fol. 19<sup>ra</sup>: ‘Declaratio autem quare in verbo vocativo intelligitur substantive verb hec est: verbum substantivum significat esse, vocative verb significat nominationem; tam esse quam nominatio rei proprie est a forma, sed differunt quia esse est a forma inquantum forma, nominatio autem est a forma inquantum nominata. Dicit enim Aristoteles quod non imponimus nomina nisi a nominatione. Sicut ergo in forma nominata intelligitur forma, sic in verbis vocativis intelligitur verbum substantivum, et sicut forma potest esse sine eius nominatione, sic substantive verb est sine intellectu verbi vocativi.’

<sup>20</sup> *CPM*, fol. 154<sup>va</sup>: ‘Ad evocationem exigitur quod evocans sit infinitum secundum significationem gratia cuius evocat ad se aliquid extra ad finitandum.’

<sup>21</sup> *CPM*, fol. 152<sup>vb</sup>: ‘Causa autem quare verba substantiva se applicant ad nomina hec est: verba substantiva significant propriam substantiam uniuscuiusque, quare non applicabit se

grammatically correct, though redundant in Latin, because *ego* signifies me by way of features I share with any other speaker whatsoever. 'I am called' (*ego vocor*) is obviously unacceptable because having-some-proper-name-or-other, which is signified by 'I am called', cannot be made more determinate by 'I', which is not a proper name, and so cannot very well indicate exactly what I am named.<sup>22</sup> In the last analysis, Kilwardby does not even think that the nominative complement works the same way for the two kinds of verb; 'I am Socrates' and 'I am man' describe what kind of being I am (*per qualitatem*), while the nominative complement of 'I am called Priscian' delimits having a name generally to having a specific name (*aliquod commune per inferius*).<sup>23</sup> One way of reading Priscian's notorious statement, he says, is that it just says that all expressions, which can be meaningfully combined with the vocative verb, can also be combined with the substantive verb, but not the other way around.<sup>24</sup>

Our two thirteenth-century theories read Priscian's 'similar force' as parallel syntactic potential which has its root in the fact that the substantive verb and vocative verb have meanings that are generic in their respective ways, and thus require determination by a complement; that complement functions, so to speak, adverbishly. If we turn to the twelfth century, however, we find attempts of

huiusmodi verbum ad substantiam, sed ad qualitatem que finit substantiam. Sed pronomen meram substantiam significat, nomen autem qualitatem generalem aut specialem, et ideo relictis pronomibus se applicat substantive verb ad omnia. Causa autem eius ex parte verborum <vocativorum> hec est: verba vocativa significant propriam nominationem uniuscuiusque, quare non applicat se tale verbum nisi ad illud in quo invenit propriam nominationem, sed non invenit eam nisi in nomine proprio, quare non se applicat nisi ad nomen proprium.'

<sup>22</sup> Kilwardby is ambivalent about *Ego sum*. *Ego sum* is technically acceptable, since the pronoun, like *sum*, signifies 'pure substance by referring to it without any quality'. *Ego sum* does not, of course, tell us anything more than *sum* does, and elsewhere he says: 'ideo nemo dicit bene "ego sum" aut "ego vocor" per se, scilicet ita quod nichil ex parte post additur hiis verbis, vel ita quod pronomina construantur (ms consistantur?) ex parte post' (fol. 152<sup>vb</sup>).

<sup>23</sup> CPM, fol. 154<sup>ra</sup>: 'Et ideo melius dicendum est quod argumentum non habent bonum simile. Substantia enim significata per substantive verb, [quia] non est nata specificari, finiri, neque intellegi per substantiam, sed per qualitatem; ideo relictis pronomibus construitur cum nominibus. Nominatio autem propria communiter per vocative verb desingnata nata est specificari per nominationem propriam specialiter sicut aliquod commune per inferius; et ideo non relinquit proprium nomen.'

<sup>24</sup> CPM, fol. 132<sup>vb</sup>: 'Alia potest esse huius textus expositio, scilicet, "quia in hiis que nominatur, etc", scilicet quod cum quibuscunque construitur vocative verb, cum eis construitur substantive verb, sed non e converso scilicet quod cum quibuscunque construitur substantivum construitur et vocativum.'

various sorts to show that the two sorts of verbs somehow share a common core of object language meaning. Not surprisingly, since there is an effort launched to show that both kinds of verbs have the same object level meaning, the critical ingenuity of these authors is concentrated on giving a special account of the function of their nominative complements.

*Petrus Helias: 'Summa super Priscianum'*

It is Petrus Helias's consistent position in his *Summa super Priscianum*,<sup>25</sup> dating to the middle of the twelfth century, that both the substantive verb and the vocative verb signify substance as 'what unites other things to itself and to each other' (*ut unitativa aliarum rerum sibi et inter se*; SSP, 508) in a 'predicative way' (*ut dicitur de altero*).<sup>26</sup> He thus rejects the view that the likes of (1) and (2) should be taken as metalinguistic; it does not seem to be Priscian's view, he says, that vocative verbs signify 'the assignment of things to names' (*suppositionem rerum nominibus*). 'What is he called?' (*quis vocatur ille?*) is not equivocal to 'By what name is he called?' (*quo nomine vocatur ille?* SSP, 914). He also rejects the view that 'being called' (*vocor*), unlike 'to be' (*sum*), signifies having-a-name (*nominacionem*), whereas 'to be' signifies 'being a substrate for some form' (*substantia*). This view is less consistent with what Priscian says in *IG*, XVII, Petrus says, than his own view; the point, presumably, is that his own view preserves a common core of meaning for the two kinds of verb. He also explicitly rejects the view that the nominative complements function, in effect, like adverbs; 'What is he called?' (*quis vocatur ille?*) does not need to be understood as 'how' (*quomodo*) or 'In what way is he named?' (*qualiter vocatur ille?* SSP, 913).

Petrus Helias first presents his own view in his discussion of *IG*, VIII.51. The substantive verb signifies substance as 'what unites forms to itself and to other things', and the vocative verb signifies substance as 'what unites names to itself and other things'. Thus these two verbs, and no others, are said to be copulas (SSP, 510); and both consignify a present time which is simple and not complex, a point, so to speak, lying between past and future (SSP, 507). They are said to have

<sup>25</sup> In form SSP is not a commentary, but a summa. It is, however, a summa that very closely 'tracks' Priscian's *IG* and frequently makes reference to what Priscian says about a particular point as it discusses that point.

<sup>26</sup> SSP, 508–09: 'Hoc ergo vocabulum "ens" merito dicitur significare substantiam ut aliarum rerum unitativa est et sibi et inter se [...]. Itaque "sum" substantive verb hoc idem significat quod "ens" sed ut dicitur de altero et hoc unum interest.'

‘similar force, he says both because they signify substance as what unites other things or names and because these alone are copulas of other <things or names> with other <things or names>’ (*SSP*, 510).

Petrus Helias is thus committed to three theses: (i) sentences like (1) and (6) state some sort of fact; (ii) (1), (2), and (6) state fundamentally the same sort of fact; and (iii) ‘Socrates’ and ‘Priscian’ in (1), (2), and (6) do not have material supposition; they do not refer autonomously to themselves as expressions. The overall position, then, is that (1), (2), and the likes of (6) are sentences of the object language that state object level facts.

In his discussion of questions and answers (*IG*, XVII.31–36), Petrus Helias returns to the idea that Priscian says that the substantive verb and vocative verb ‘mean almost the same thing’ (*SSP*, 925).

The *vocative verb* signifies substance as what unites names to itself and to other things. Priscian says that substantive and vocative <verbs> have similar force for this reason: to the extent that the *substantive verb* signifies substance, the *vocative verb* does so as well. They also have the same power because just as the *substantive verb* can conjoin [*copulare*] a predicate other than itself to the subject, so also can the *vocative verb*. (*SSP*, 926)

In his treatment of *evocation* Petrus Helias says that ‘to be’ as copula refers to substance as what unites some form to itself, and so as a copula it demands that the proper name which is conferred on account of that form be attached directly to it (*exigit ut adiungatur*). Because the proper name directly qualifies or determines ‘am’, no pronoun is needed to pull the proper name from third person to first person. What has been said about ‘to be’ goes for verbs like ‘am called’ as well, he says, because they have ‘the same force in this respect’ (*SSP*, 974). His idea, apparently, is that I respond to a question by using my name to specify who I am in ‘I am Priscian’; and similarly in ‘I called Priscian’ I use my name to specify what I am called. I use the same expression and give the same information, it seems, in answer to both questions.

Petrus Helias is thus rejecting the sort of account we found in Jordanus and Kilwardby, which simply assigns different meanings to ‘to be’ and verbs like ‘am called’, and explains their ‘similar force’ in terms of parallel syntactic potential. He seems to reject this sort of account in part because he understands the ‘similar force’ of ‘to be’ and ‘am called’ when they are used as copulas as their having a common core of meaning, that is, combining or uniting, differing only with respect to what sort of thing is united. It is this common core of meaning that is reflected by their syntactic combinatorial potential; for Petrus Helias, both ‘to be’ and ‘am called’ are copulas syntactically speaking precisely because both signify the real unity of forms by or in substance.

Underlying Petrus Helias's theory of meaning is a metaphysics of substance.<sup>27</sup> A substance and its properties are in actuality 'one and the same'. 'To be' signifies this real unity. This is a unity that the intellect can break down in the mind for its own purposes:

Although there are ten highest genera of being, that is substance and quality and the like, all of them are in actuality [*in actu*] one and the same with substance. For Socrates and the whiteness of Socrates are in actuality one and the same. They are not identical, but I say that they are one and the same in actuality. For what is the whiteness of Socrates in actuality but Socrates's being white? Therefore substance is what unites accidents. For it receives the accidents and unites and conjoins them with itself [...]. But although substance and all the things which inhere in it are in actuality one and the same, reason distinguishes and disjoins them, that is, so that it knows substance as such and the accidents as such. (*SSP*, 199–200)

Names were invented to correspond to the distinctions made by reason; 'white' (*albus*), for example, was invented as a name for substance as it participates in whiteness, even though the substance and its whiteness are identical in actuality; then came 'whiteness' (*albedo*) to mark our ability to think of the quality as such. 'Being' (*ens*) signifies substance as one and the same with its accidents in actuality, but indeterminately or 'confusedly' (*SSP*, 200–01; 508–09); it does not signify one thing rather than another. 'I am' (*sum*) signifies substance in the way 'ens' does, but with predicative force (*ut dicitur de altero*; *SSP*, 509); therefore it can serve as a copula, a sign of the actual inherence of anything substantial or accidental in an underlying substrate or their actual unity or co-inherence with one another. The noun *substance* designates substance (*substantiam*) as distinguished by reason from its inhereents. And just as the substantive verb was invented to signify substance as what unites forms to itself, so the vocative verb was invented to signify substance as what unites the relevant names to substances and other things (*SSP*, 510).

There are some difficulties with Petrus Helias's account. He refuses to say that the noun complements of 'am called' (*vocor*) and the like have material imposition (*SSP*, 915) — i.e., that they are used to signify themselves.<sup>28</sup> But despite the

<sup>27</sup> See Kneepkens, 'Grammar and Semantics'; Irène Rosier-Catach, 'Les Acceptions du terme "substantia" chez Pierre Hélié', in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains* (see n. 8, above), pp. 299–324.

<sup>28</sup> Petrus Helias typically uses 'imposition' where later figures will use 'supposition'; insofar as 'supposition' has a technical meaning for him, it designates the relation of the object referred to the expression, and not the meaning of the expression itself. See C. H. Kneepkens, "Suppositio" and "Supponere" in 12th-Century Grammar', in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains* (see n. 8, above), pp. 325–51.

alleged semantic parallel between 'to be' (*sum*) and 'am called' (*vocor*) — indeed, partly because the latter is supposed to signify substance as united to words — it is hard to see how Petrus Helias can resist saying that 'Priscian' in (2) and 'Socrates' in (10) I am called/named *Socrates* (*Socrates vocor/nominor*) refer to themselves as expressions. (Let us henceforth italicize the suspect *Socrates* to signal the tension.)

Initially, we seem to be looking at a technicality. Petrus Helias is indeed generally reluctant to recognize material imposition as a true shift of signification. In his discussion of the alleged multiple significations of some nouns, he says:

The <view> of the ancients is wrong, that the word 'homo' changes its signification according to its context as when we say 'a man runs' [*homo currit*], 'man is species' [*homo est species*], 'man is a name' [*homo est nomen*]. For in all these <cases>, 'man' signifies the same thing. (*SSP*, 215–16)

'Man' signifies the individuals it does on the basis of some common quality they have; and as Petrus Helias understands the imposition of names, if 'Socrates' is my proper name, it signifies me by way of some uniquely specifying property or quality (socrateity). Still, he allows that in such sentences as (11) *Man* is a name (*Homo est nomen*), 'man' names itself (*ipsum se nominat*); here, he says, we are not talking about a man, but about the name 'man' (*SSP*, 193). The ancients called this phenomenon 'material imposition', he observes, since here 'man' represents itself, represents, so to speak, the matter out of which a name is made by conferring it on something (*per impositionem*; *SSP*, 193). His rationale for making this distinction between what 'man' signifies and what it names in (11) is clear: we have got to hold that there is no radical change of meaning or re-imposition of 'man' in (11), since it continues to be true of 'man' that it is the name it is only if 'man' continues to be a word with its imposed signification. The same should be true, *mutatis mutandis* of 'Socrates' in (10), for (10) is true only so long as 'Socrates' signifies 'me'.

It may seem that the only point of substantial importance about 'Socrates' in (11) can easily be conceded by Petrus Helias, but there is more at stake here than a technicality that marks a reservation we can all more or less agree with in principle, for he in fact does not think that 'Socrates' in (10) and 'homo' in (11) are used in the same way. (11), he seems to think, is a sentence about language; its subject term represents itself pure and simple (though it does not of course signify itself). However much the meaningfulness of (11) presupposes that 'man' has been imposed to signify some group of things, (11) is nevertheless not *about* the things signified by 'man'. By contrast, when someone is pointing at me and asks,

‘What is he called?’, he is asking something which is neither just a question about a name nor just a question about an individual, but a question about the connection between my name and me. Sentence (10) answers that question. Divested of the imposed connection with me, ‘Socrates’ is not my name, but only vocal sound. (10) is true, then, exactly insofar as ‘Socrates’ continues to signify a certain individual, in this case me, the speaker, by way of a characteristic quality.

Thus when someone asks ‘What is he called?’ he is not asking just about the name, nor just about its meaning, but about the union of thing and name. For ‘ille’ in the question indicates [*notat*] a thing; by ‘vocatur’ the name is indicated. The union of thing and vocal sound is indicated by the fact that these two are put together in the question; ‘who’ indicates that it is about this union that there is a question. And it is this union that is given as a response when ‘Trypho’ is said, since neither the name alone nor the signification alone is the answer, but the union of thing and vocal sound. (*SSP*, 915)

Elsewhere Petrus Helias says that (10) means the same thing as (12) My name is *Socrates* (*Nomen meum est Socrates*; *SSP*, 507). (12) cannot really be true unless ‘Socrates’ signifies me by way of my characteristic property. (10), he thinks, is very close in meaning to (6) (I am Socrates; *Socrates sum*); if there is something peculiar about ‘Socrates’ in (10), then ‘Socrates’ in (6) is suspect too, since in both cases I identify myself. But even if (10) and (6) are both explicitly about language, neither is straightforwardly metalinguistic.

There is something to be said for Petrus Helias’s account. His theory does give solid content to Priscian’s ‘*similem vim*’. And his account of the meaning of ‘Trypho’ as an answer to ‘What is he called?’ underscores the parallel between that question and ‘Who is Caesar?’, which, he says, is also a question about a name and the individual it names — this question really asks what individual has the property associated with the name ‘Caesar’ (*de supposito proprietati nominis*). Like Petrus Helias’s theory about ‘What is he called?’, this analysis makes some sense; knowing that someone called ‘Caesar’ crossed the Rubicon, I can certainly use ‘Who is Caesar?’ to ask which of two individuals in front of me is that person; and probably often ‘Quis est Caesar?’ is a way of asking for the identifying feature of someone whose name I know. Moreover, if ‘Trypho’ did refer to both name and person, we would have a reason why neither other expressions like ‘this name’, which designate the name, nor other expressions like ‘this man’ (*iste homo*), which designate the person, are appropriate answers to ‘What is he called?’ and why they cannot be substituted for ‘Typho’ in (13) (He) is called *Trypho* (*iste vocatur Trypho*). But the claim that ‘Trypho’ as an answer to ‘Who is he?’ and *a fortiori* as it is used in (10) refers to the union of the person and his name remains mysterious — and a good deal less plausible than an analysis which says that ‘this

one' (*ille*) refers to the person, 'Trypho' refers to itself self-referentially, and 'is called' (*vocatur*) refers to (his) being-named — which is different from his being someone or other. Thus in the end, the alleged near-identity of meanings of the two kinds of verb is hard to substantiate. It is hard to ignore the attractions of the thirteenth-century grammarians' position that 'What is he called?' and (13) are about being called by some name, and that (12) is too; and (6) and 'Who is Caesar?' are about being someone or other, and that there is thus a considerable difference in meaning between 'to be/am' (*sum*), which has to do with who the person is question is, and 'am called' (*vocor*), which has to do with what the person is called.

*More Radical Approaches: Robert of Paris, 'Summa "Breve sit"'; and Robert Blund, 'Summa in arte grammatica'*

Petrus Helias's account is elaborate and well argued. The tensions in this kind of account tend to show that at least one of its basic tenets must be given up. Indeed, it looks as if (ii), which says that *sum* and *vocor* mean more or less the same thing, is wrong. And if they do not mean the same thing, more or less, then (6) and (7) may well be sentences of the object language, even if the likes of (1) are not. And even if Petrus Helias is right about the sorts of information people are typically seeking when they ask what someone's name is, (iii) is suspect as well, if it commits us to saying that *Socrates* in (10) refers to both itself and Socrates. The idea was bound to arise that even if the substantive verb and the vocative verbs do not signify the same thing, or at least not in the same way, perhaps they are nonetheless similar in function, that is, are used to perform the same kind of action. And it is quite clear that there is an action that a sentence like (1) is characteristically used to perform; initially some such formula as (1) was used to attach a name to an individual by way of some property or properties which uniquely characterize that individual.<sup>29</sup>

Robert of Paris agrees with Petrus Helias that *Socrates* in (1) does not have its material imposition: it is not here taken as referring to itself (*SBS*, p. 52), and (1)

<sup>29</sup> Throughout these discussions there is a systematic lack of clarity about whether this 'proper quality' is a quality unique to the individual named, such that it is what the name means, whether users of the name know this or not, or whether the 'quality' in question is whatever quality they have in mind. This comes partly from the fact that in many of these hypothetical exchanges, the individual is supposed to be present, and thus perceived in some unique way.

is not just an alternative way of writing 'I am called by the name of *Socrates*'. His own view is that in (1) *Socrates* signifies nothing. To this position the obvious objection is that (1) would then mean the same as (14) He is called (*iste vocatur*). In response Robert says that like '-ing' in 'reading' (*leg* in *legit*), such expressions can affect the meaning of the composites in which they occur without themselves signifying anything. He then considers the further objection that 'Socrates' in (1) is not like these other expressions, since it functions as a noun and must therefore according to Priscian contribute some meaning to (1) by virtue of having to do with a 'proper quality' on account of which it was imposed on an individual. In response, he concedes that 'Socrates' has some sort of signification: 'Socrates' here signifies *or consignifies* the idea connected with the proper name or appellative noun (*intellectum nominationis vel appellationis*; *SBS*, pp. 54, 65).<sup>30</sup> A question like 'What is he called?', he says, is indeed about someone's identifying characteristic, but it is not the characteristic which is conjoined to the subject by the vocative verb; it is rather the proper name, which conjoins itself insofar as it connects with the subject so as to provide it with a quality (*quod copulat se ipsum pro qualitate*; *SBS*, p. 54). We can get to the same result, he says, by supposing that I start off by knowing both someone's proper name and his uniquely identifying characteristic, but that his name then changes, and that as a result, I utter 'What is he called?' It is easy to see that my question is not about the identifying characteristic, which I still know. My question has to do with what proper name is now connected with the identifying characteristic I still have in mind.

And this fits with the exposition, which we gave above, that is that when an interrogative expression is conjoined to a pronoun, the question has to do with the identifying characteristic, that is with the proper name. It follows that when 'he is called *Socrates*' is said, the name does not here signify the man, but rather the idea connected with the name or appellative noun. (*SBS*, p. 56)

It seems correct to say that in asking 'Quis vocatur ille?' in this situation, the identifying characteristic connected with the name, a characteristic, which I have in mind, plays a role; after all, I am asking what *someone I have in mind* is called. But the solution as stated is implausible. (10) and (1) really do not seem to be about my idea of Socrates or about his identifying quality, however much they may involve those things. And the view that 'Socrates' in such sentences refers to nothing does not explain at all why one name rather than another makes the

<sup>30</sup> Another possibility is that 'intellectum nominationis sive appellationis' means 'the idea of having this [e.g., *Socrates*] for a name' or 'being called this [e.g., 'man']'.

sentence come out true, or why it is proper names in general that occur meaningfully in such sentences.<sup>31</sup>

Like his predecessors and near contemporaries, Robert Blund focuses mainly on a theory about the proper name 'Socrates' in (1) (He is called *Socrates*) (*iste vocatur Socrates*). Normally *Socrates* signifies substance, not confusedly like 'man', in virtue of what *Socrates* has in common with other human beings (*proprietalem communem*), but in virtue of some property or quality unique to *Socrates* (*propria qualitas*),<sup>32</sup> so that it signifies the individual man Socrates. But, he argues, in (1), 'Socrates' does not have its normal signification. He gives the now familiar arguments. Even if 'this man' (*iste homo*) is being used to pick out the man Socrates, who is running, from (1) we cannot infer 'He is called *this man*' (*iste vocatur iste hom*) or 'He is called *man*' (*iste vocatur homo*) or 'He is called *Socrates* who runs' (*iste vocatur Socrates qui currit*), for that would mean that 'this man', 'man', and 'man who runs' were names of some sort (*esse de nominatione/traheretur ad nominationem*).<sup>33</sup> Moreover, he argues, anyone who thinks that 'Socrates' retains its usual signification in 'He is called *Socrates*' must reject (15) Either of them is called *Socrates* (*uterque vocatur Socrates*). Here is the argument: suppose (15) is true. 'Socrates' can apply to diverse individuals only equivocally, with the result that having-a-name would be specified in two different ways if (15) were true, which would seem to mean that it cannot be properly specified by either of them. But if it is not true that either of them is named 'Socrates', then the other is not named 'Socrates' either. And thus from 'Either of them is called *Socrates*' (*uterque*

<sup>31</sup> In the *Summa 'Absoluta cuiuslibet'* of Petrus Hispanus, again writing in the second half of the twelfth century, we find a more subtle and convincing version of this. He argues that 'Socrates' in (1) and (10) does not have material supposition (*Absoluta*, p. 20), though it is not in normal referential position either. His solution is that semantically the vocative verb conjoins *both* form and name to pure substance (*substantiam meram*), but not in exactly the same way. Directly, it conjoins the name, but the name 'pulls its associated quality with it', which is something only a proper name can do, since only a proper name is attached to such a quality. Thus syntactically (*ex vi sua*) verbs like *vocor* are conjoined only to the proper name. Such sentences are true, however, only if the quality the name pulls with it is the identifying quality of the individual who is said to have the name (*Absoluta*, p. 21). The most significant point in this analysis is that the emphasis has shifted subtly from what expressions like (1) and (10) *mean* to what they *do*, i.e., pull with them the associated identifying property.

<sup>32</sup> *SAG*, p. 42: 'similiter hoc nomen homo includit hoc nomen animal; unde homo dicitur animal rationale mortale etc., nec simpliciter animal, sed animal tale. Et in quo preponderat speciale, eius communem nuncupamus qualitatem. Simili ratione illud in quo nomen proprium habundat a speciali, propriam solemus dicere qualitatem.'

<sup>33</sup> *SAG*, pp. 46–47.

<istorum> vocatur Socrates) ‘This one is not called Socrates’ (*iste non vocatur Socrates*) would follow for both, which is crazy. And so (15) must be denied by anyone who thinks that ‘Socrates’ is used significantly after ‘is called’.<sup>34</sup> But in fact, Robert continues, there is nothing really wrong with claims like (15).<sup>35</sup>

But ‘Socrates’ in ‘He is called *Socrates*’ is not taken *materialiter* either. Robert’s arguments are convoluted and somewhat hazy, but the overall point is clear: it is hard to explain how an expression which is not part of the language, being only a special kind of name of itself, and thus not referring to anything in the semantic domain of the language, can be part of a sentence of the language — and still harder to figure out how it could function grammatically in the sentence if it is not part of the sentence.<sup>36</sup>

Robert has an interesting proposal. ‘Socrates’ in (1) and (10) is not taken materially or significantly, but in a way which lies between them, ‘name-ishly’ (*nuncupative*).<sup>37</sup> The natural reaction to this proposal, I think, is to say that it is not very helpful — it just says that the function of ‘*Socrates*’ in ‘He is called *Socrates*’ is distinctive because the expression functions as the vocative. But this natural reaction is too hasty. For one thing, Robert has got a fairly clear and

<sup>34</sup> This is not exactly the argument in the text: ‘Item. Hii qui hanc sustinent partem, non concedunt “uterque istorum vocatur Socrates”, quia hoc nomen Socrates in aliqua significatione convenit isti et in alia convenit illi, quare sumitur equivoce; quare uterque istorum non vocatur Socrates; et sic alter non vocatur Socrates. sed queratur utrum vocatur Socrates, “iste non vocatur Socrates” falsum est et absurdum asserere.’ Kneepkens’s edition emends the last sentence to read: ‘Si queratur “uter vocatur Socrates” “iste non vocatur Socrates”, falsum est et absurdum asserere.’ My interpretation of the argument demands instead: ‘Sed sic sequeretur “uterque vocatur Socrates”, “iste non vocatur Socrates”. Falsum est et absurdum asserere.’

<sup>35</sup> *SAG*, p. 49: ‘As Priscian says: omnes ab illo qui primo uocatus est Cornelius, hoc nomen habuerunt’ (*IG*, II.32). Therefore he must mean to accept that two people can both be called ‘Cornelius’.

<sup>36</sup> Thus it cannot be held to be part of the sentence because it cannot be combined with ‘uocatur’ either transitively or intransitively. If, on the other hand, it is not part of the sentence, either ‘*Socrates*’ contributes nothing to the meaning of the sentence or (1) is simply a more specific way of saying ‘*Socrates* uocatur hoc nomine’. That cannot be, however, since we know that *uocatur* can be followed by non-names like *buba*. None of these arguments seem really conclusive.

<sup>37</sup> Abelard, *Sup. Per.*, uses ‘verbum nuncupativum’ as a general designation for all verbs like *vocor*. Such verbs connect names to the subject of the sentence, so that ‘Socrates’ in ‘iste vocatur Socrates’ has changed meaning; it refers to the name ‘Socrates’ which ‘non in designatione rei est, sed nominis’ (p. 363). Abelard uses this nuncupative sense of the verb to explain how the truth of sentences like ‘chimaera est chimaera vel est non homo’ can be preserved; if we take the verb *est* ‘in sensu nuncupationis’, the sentence is really equivalent to ‘chimaera vocatur chimaera vel non homo’ (p. 361).

substantive account of expressions that function name-ishly; as he understands it, they function in a way I will call 'quasi-performatively'. Furthermore the theory as Robert explains it has got significant explanatory potential for the theory of syntax. It explains convincingly why sentences like (15) are acceptable, as well as some of the most plausible examples of the notorious *relatio simplex*.

In a sentence like 'He is called *Socrates*', Robert says:

The proper name introduces itself [*presentat se*] into the sentence, so that it is an indicator of there-being-a-naming [*nota nominationis*]. We say that it is used properly, although not significatively. For just as the article has both a function and signification, the function of distinguishing gender, number and case, and signification by virtue of being used as a relative expression [*relative*], similarly every proper name has the function of applying or focusing being-a-name [*adhibende nominationis*], and the signification of a person. And with the *vocative verb* it is used in its function, not in its signification.<sup>38</sup>

The function (*officium*) of a proper name intrinsically involves restricting or applying naming generally to the naming of a particular individual by means of some 'proper quality'. Robert has clear account of what this 'proper quality' is. It is not the collection of all the referent's qualities; nor is it the set of external or apparent qualities that are used to pick out the individual, for example *Socrates*' being that clever, short, snub-nosed teacher of Plato; nor is it just the fact of having a proper name. The 'proper quality', Robert says, does not add anything to the vague and confused common quality by which 'homo' attaches to its significates except the reference to a unique individual. If we wanted to be completely clear about the issue, we would not write 'proper quality', but 'the properness of the quality' (*proprietas qualitatis*) or, even better, the making-proper of the quality (*appropriatione qualitatis*). Thus the proper name 'draws the signification of the name of the species to a determinate referent'.<sup>39</sup> It is by the making-

<sup>38</sup> *SAG*, p. 51: 'Nobis placet quod nomen proprium cum uerbo uocatiuo nec ponitur materialiter nec ponitur significatiue, sed medium habrens poni, scilicet nuncupatiue. Presentat enim se nomen proprium in oratione, ut nota sit nominationis. Et dicimus proprie poni, non tamen significatiue ponitur. Quemadmodum enim articulus officium habet et significationem, officium discernendi genus et numerum et casum, significationem quia relatiue ponitur, similiter quodlibet nomen proprium habet officium adhibende nominationis, significationem uero persone. Et cum uerbo uocatiuo in offitio ponitur, non in significatione, ubique tamen proprie, quia uel in proprio offitio uel in propria significatione.'

<sup>39</sup> *SAG*, pp. 43–44: '[E]x supradictis claret quid sit (*ms=sic*) querere de propria qualitate. Est enim querere de propria qualitate querere de proprietate qualitatis, idest de appropriatione qualitatis, ut de finale sit. Hac enim intentione et hoc fine queritur de propria qualitate, ut respondeatur nomen significans substantiam cum appropriatione qualitatis, ut hoc nomen *Socrates*. Dicitur enim hoc nomen significare substantiam cum appropriatione qualitatis (*ms add.* ut hoc

proper of 'man' that we get the proper name 'Socrates' that refers to a unique individual.

One familiar objection to Robert's proposal elicits further elaboration of the theory. To the objection that if 'Socrates' signifies nothing in 'iste vocatur *Socrates*' (1), then (1) has the same signification as (14) (He is called) (*iste vocatur*). Robert replies that (14) does not make sense in Latin, so long as 'is called' functions as a vocative verb.<sup>40</sup> The vocative verb by itself signifies a linkage between subject and being-named-something, a *vinculum nominationis*.<sup>41</sup> 'Socrates is called' and 'I am called' are logically incomplete. The appropriate response to such an utterance would be, 'Is called *what*?'<sup>42</sup> Some proper name like '*Socrates*' is necessary to the meaning of (1) (He is called *Socrates*) because the function it performs is necessary to the meaning of the sentence. Even if it does not actually signify or name Socrates here, it presents itself as a proper name, as an expression imposed to refer to the sort of entity, which has a proper name.

Similarly, he says, when we say in a grammar lesson: 'The nominative: hic magister' (*nominatiuo hic magister*),

*hic* signifies nothing; and indeed, neither does the whole expression, which sets out and fully develops a certain point of grammar about case, number and genus; but if it were removed, the remaining words would hardly suffice to develop the same point of grammar fully.<sup>43</sup>

nomen *Socrates*) quia uagam et communem, ut supra diximus, significationem nominis specialis trahit ad certum suppositum.'

<sup>40</sup> *SAG*, p. 53: 'Non prout hoc uerbum uocatur ad nominationem pertinet, Latine dicitur "iste uocatur", nisi significet passionem aliunde illatam.' See also 'Uerbum enim uocatiuum sibi semper aliquid desiderat apponi ad nominationem, cum quo intransitiue construatur' (*SAG*, p. 57), and 'Non enim in ui uocatiuorum retenta ponuntur absque nominatiuis sequentibus' (*SAG*, p. 163).

<sup>41</sup> This distinction between *vocatio*, which is having-a-name, and *nominatio*, which is being-a-name is not made systematically by Priscian or by Robert's predecessors.

<sup>42</sup> *SAG*, p. 155: 'Quare uerbum uocatiuum solam nominationem apponat, inde sumetur ratio quod quemadmodum uerbum substantiuum habet se ad accidentalibus et substantialibus, ita uerbum uocatiuum se habet ad nominationem. Sed uerbum substantiuum ita se habet ad ea, quod ea uincit; et eo uinculo intercedente ea sola coniunguntur. Ita uerbum uocatiuum uinculum est nominationis. Non enim uerbum uocatiuum nominationem, sed uocationem significat, et uocatione mediante solam apponit nominationem.' 'Thus', Robert continues, 'when Priscian says "uerbum uocatiuum nominationem", it needs to be explicated: Idest uocationem. The uerbum substantiuum can also function as a *vinculum*, as it does in "iste est albus", but it need not do so, since "bare being" [*nudum esse*] can itself be predicated of someone, as in "Socrates est", just like running in 'Socrates currit'.'

<sup>43</sup> *SAG*, p. 53: 'Similiter cum dicitur "nominatiuo hic magister", hoc pronomen *hic* nichil significat nec etiam tota illa oratio aliquid significat, sed quandam instituit doctrinam et insinuat

The signification of a sentence does not arise out of the significations of the parts, he continues, but out of their meanings (*intellectus*). And so, although this name ‘Socrates’ signifies nothing here, by having its function, it works together with the other parts of the sentence to build up the meaning of the sentence. It focuses or applies being-a-name (*nominatio*) — it allows the sentence to say specifically *what* name the individual has who is said to be called-something-or-other (*vocatio*); and because it supplies some element of meaning by applying or focusing being-a-name in this way, it is indispensable to the signification of the sentence.<sup>44</sup> The idea that some kinds of expressions contribute to the signification of a sentence without themselves referring to anything is, of course, not new; syncategorematic expressions are typically held to work in this way. The idea that nouns and pronouns in some contexts can function in this way is novel, however.

With respect to ‘In the nominative: hic magister’, Robert’s approach looks to be performative for the entire sentence. The sentence is not ‘fact stating’, but is used to perform a speech act; thus it is neither true nor false, strictly speaking. The same can be said, no doubt, about a possibility Robert mentions in passing, that sentences like (1) (*iste vocatur Socrates*) or ‘He will be called *Socrates*’ might be used in the primeval situation fully performatively to baptize someone. Such speech acts would have felicity conditions — there is something infelicitous about baptizing penguins or teaching my students to write ‘masters’ as the singular of ‘master’; but they are not properly evaluated for truth or falsity. Thus in the case of sentences like (1), the issue of truth and falsity is our cue that the nomenclative use of proper nouns in such sentences is not *fully* performative. These nouns remain attached to their referents (*significationes*); in virtue of this attachment, they have the power to make being-a-name more specific by being the name of the individual in question — they draw it into being-named-*Socrates*.<sup>45</sup> But they do

de accidentibus, scilicet de casu, numero et genere. Si tamen dematur, minime residuum eandem poterit insinuare doctrinam.’ It seems clear that to the extent that Robert takes this parallel seriously, he has slipped toward treating the entirety of (1) and (10) as performative in force, and thus toward a difference of meaning between substantive verb and vocative verb.

<sup>44</sup> *SAG*, p. 53: ‘Unde licet hoc nomen *Socrates* nichil ibi significet, cum aliis partibus aliquem constituit intellectum. Suum enim complet officium, quia nominationem adhibet et ad significationem orationis ex intellectu quem suggerit, gratia nominationis coadiuuat.’

<sup>45</sup> *SAG*, p. 179: ‘Censemus enim dictionem ex parte predicati positam cum uerbo uocatiuo poni non-significatiue. Ad hoc dicimus quod uere oporteret significationem proprii attribui, non tamen exerceri. Uerbo enim uocatiuo mediante attribuitur significatio proprio nomini et ibi proprium nomen ordinatur ad significationem, sed non exercet. [...] Ipsum enim illi quod ei apponitur, quiddam confert et quiddam aufert. Confert officium, aufert significationem. Unde proprium nomen, quando ei adiungitur, dampnum habet significationis, sed retinet officium.’

not introduce their referents into the meaning of the sentence; their signification is in eclipse or 'has waned'. Technically speaking, then, they signify nothing.

One happy consequence of Robert's theory that 'Socrates' in sentences like 'He is called *Socrates*' signifies nothing is that 'Either of them is called *Socrates*' can be accepted as true just in case each of two individuals is named 'Socrates'. The issue of equivocation does not arise because neither individual is signified by 'Socrates' in such a sentence, although the sentence tells us what each one is named.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, we can allow that (1) is a correct answer to 'What are these [persons] called?' (*isti qui vocantur?*), which is also acceptable, provided *qui* also signifies nothing, and therefore nothing plural.<sup>47</sup>

Robert also uses his theory of nuncupative meaning explicitly to justify his acceptance of one instance of the notorious *relatio simplex*,<sup>48</sup> a construction in which the relative pronoun does not refer to what its antecedent refers to: (16) The rational animal is called man, who is the most excellent of creatures (*Animal rationale vocatur homo, qui est dignissima creatura*). Here no equivocal use of 'man' is implied because it signifies nothing.<sup>49</sup> Robert does not himself invoke his theory explicitly to explain (17) He is Socrates, which is also what he is called too (*iste est Socrates, qui et ille vocatur*), and (18) This one is called *Socrates*, which is who he is (*iste vocatur Socrates, qui iste est*). This is perhaps because these sentences already count as legitimate in virtue of being instances of the *relatio simplex*. But it does seem that those instances of the *relatio simplex* which are plausibly taken as correct in some complicated way, and not just something illogical that we nonetheless understand perfectly well,<sup>50</sup> are precisely the ones which involve the vocative verb or some near relative of it like 'is said' (*dicitur*). (17) and (18) are very similar to (19) Giorgione was so-called because of his size. In (19) 'Giorgione' has to refer to the painter — but the relative requires it to introduce the painter's

<sup>46</sup> Robert does not allow 'terque istorum est *Socrates*', though he allows the question 'uter istorum est iste?' and 'uter istorum est *Socrates*?'

<sup>47</sup> It is plural in form so as to agree grammatically with *ocantur*.

<sup>48</sup> For a general discussion of the *relatio simplex*, see C. H. Kneepkens, "Mulier Quae Damnavit Salvavit: A Note on the Early Development of the Relatio Simplex", *Vivarium*, 14 (1976), 1–25; and 'The Relatio Simplex in the Grammatical Tracts of the Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Century', *Vivarium*, 15 (1977), 1–30.

<sup>49</sup> *SAG*, pp. 121–22: 'Per relatiuum item potest agi de rei manerie, ut "animal rationale uocatur homo, qui est dignissima creatura". Nec agi de manerie uel agi de re hic diuiditur, quia nomen cum uerbo uocatio nominationem determinans non ponitur in aliqua significatione.'

<sup>50</sup> Indeed, Robert allows such sentences as 'omo est dignissima creatura, quod deriuatur ab homo' and "'homo" est nomen appellativum, qui est dignissima creatura' (see *SAG*, p. 121).

name into the sentence as well. It is not a bad account of the truth of (19) to say that 'Giorgione' is indeterminate between name and person — or, as Robert would, that 'Giorgione' signifies the person to start with, but when we are looking at the relative, its signification 'has waned', since we now concentrate instead on its function (*officium*).

### Conclusion

Nothing we have seen, I think, shows that there is anything metaphysically suspect about the idea common to all these theorists, and to Priscian as well, that 'He is called *Socrates*' and the like are sentences of the object language about individuals and their attributes, albeit their institutional attributes. Moreover, it seems clear that these medieval theorists are not just slaves to the Priscianic tradition; there are also genuine intuitions about the meaning of the vocative verb and its kinship with forms of 'to be' in play. The more innovative analyses are those from the twelfth-century grammarians. By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, theories like Robert Blund's have been succeeded by the 'two-meaning' theories we find in Jordanus and Kilwardby, where the intuitive pull of the idea that there is some common core of meaning between 'to be called' and 'to be' is on the wane. The reason for the shift must remain to some extent a matter for speculation; but it is likely that there is a parallel here with the semantic simplifications of twentieth-century logic and philosophy of language that aim at formal representation of the logic of natural language and tend toward analysing (19) as just an aberrant and not very correct way of putting (5), which is in turn an unproblematic metalinguistic claim about an individual and his name.<sup>51</sup> In a parallel way, it seems, the increasing general and systematic theories of linguistic structure and function of the later Middle Ages tend to crowd out a theoretical interest in idiosyncratic constructions and in problems that look to be specifically lexical, rather than matters of general syntax.

<sup>51</sup> Quine, 'Reference and Modality': 'It is easy to translate (2) [*scil.* Giorgione was so called because of his size] into another statement which contains two occurrences of the name, one purely referential and the other not: (5) Giorgione was called 'Giorgione' because of his size [...]. The second occurrence of the personal name is no more referential than any other occurrence within a context of quotes' (p. 18). For Quine as for Robert, there are mixed cases, though Quine's cases are of a different kind: 'It would not be quite accurate to conclude that an occurrence of a name within single quotes is never referential. Consider the statements (6) 'Giorgione played chess' is true, and (7) 'Giorgione' named a chess player, each of which is true according as the quotationless statement (8) Giorgione played chess, is true or false' (p. 18).

## Law and Disorder in the Twelfth Century



## THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE DEVIL IN GREGORY THE GREAT, ANSELM OF CANTERBURY, AND HEINRICH VON KLEIST

M. B. Pranger

Generally speaking Christianity is supposed to have developed a specific idea of the human person as an integral, undivided entity. If it has any achievements to boast of, this indeed, seems to be a suitable candidate. The apostle Paul, for one, can be seen as one of the originators of this idea. For him, human faculties were no longer to be reduced to separate faculties of the mind as in Greek anthropology. Man was rather to be judged as being 'sold under sin' (Romans 7. 14) and vivified by the Holy Spirit. That being so, no stronghold in the human mind was to be appealed to in order to set oneself free, to exercise control over one's emotions and intellect, to be dispassionate and self-sufficient.<sup>1</sup> In Pauline anthropology it is either/or, dead or alive. This particular view of human integrity was, so it seemed, to be refined and brought to perfection by Augustine who, in particular in his *Confessions*, had established the presence of an undivided subject. Crying out to his Maker he drew the portrait of a *persona*, a person in the modern sense of the word, who, in one way or another, was made after the image of an even more undivided subject, God. Thus the addressee, however remote and unapproachable, was to be seen as the very subsistence of man and the guarantee of his existential shape. Admittedly, this is an ideal picture of what man should have looked like had he not have been tainted by sin.

<sup>1</sup> For a general discussion of the Stoic influence on Christianity see Marcia L. Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, II: *Stoicism in Latin Christian Thought through the Sixth Century*, ed. by Heiko A. Oberman, *Studies in the History of Christian Thought*, 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1985). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Paradoxically, it is the same Paul and, following in his footsteps while radicalizing the Pauline view, the same Augustine, so convinced of the integrity of the human person, who are also to be held responsible for the image of the divided self. Inside the human person, there seem to be different wills at war with one another, the outcome of which can only be guaranteed by the intervention of divine grace:

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, I do [...]. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me for the body of this death? (Romans 7. 19–24)

This proliferation of different wills being so intense inevitably raises the question as to the proliferation of persons which would seem to result from it. If so, what would be left of the *Unverwechselbarkeit*,<sup>2</sup> the hard-core identity of the human person? In view of the simultaneous occurrence of the extreme positions of the possibility of utter metamorphosis on the one hand and inalienable identity on the other, the idea of human integrity would seem to become utopian indeed. The urgency of those questions is further reinforced by the fact that, from a Christian viewpoint, it is evil and sin that set into motion processes of metamorphosis inside the human person. As a result, loss of identity is a consequence of sin and evil. That being so, Christian thought must address the following question: How is it possible to speak about loss of identity in view of the fact that the *Unverwechselbarkeit*, the inalienability of the human person, is supposed by definition to prevent such a move from happening?

In particular Augustine and his 'dialectical' follower Anselm of Canterbury have explicitly dealt with the interconnectedness of the loss of identity and evil, of self-loss, that is, and, it should be added, its positive counterpart, the sustainability of self and the acceptance of divine grace. Thus we can observe Augustine, in his *Confessions*, discovering the *libri Platonici* and once and for all depriving evil of its claim of substantiality by reducing the *unde malum*, through introspection, to nonexistence in the face of God and Creation. Anselm, in his turn, provided this Augustinian move with a philosophical underpinning which excluded the devil and evil from the game of being and existence. In Anselm's view the will with which the devil once upon a time possessed when still belonging to the company of good angels, has given up perseverance, *perseverantia*, is based on

<sup>2</sup> See the interesting volume about the development of personal identity in the early modern era, edited by Peter von Moos: *Unverwechselbarkeit: Persönliche Identität und Identifikation in der vormodernen Gesellschaft* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2004).

nothing.<sup>3</sup> By sinning the devil has willed nothing. Counterintuitive though it may seem, this 'willing nothing' does not mean that the devil has abandoned something which he has first willed in a positive way. 'Willing nothing', in Anselm's interpretation, is taken to the letter. By giving up perseverance before anything was given to him the devil has failed to will to the end. As a result, he did not receive anything. His non-perseverance in willing the good is without object and without gift or cause. 'For even if giving were always the cause of receiving, not-giving would not always be the cause of non-receiving.'<sup>4</sup> For Anselm perseverance or non-perseverance precedes the act of giving and receiving or not-giving and not-receiving. His concept of will and gift is based on what he calls *pervelle*, willing to the end — an end that is 'in the beginning'. It is only through this notion of *pervelle* that evil is altogether banished from the process of willing, since the completeness of will presupposes the impossibility of willing nothing.

This radical exclusion of evil from the realm of being and, anthropologically speaking, willing and receiving as well as its reduction to pure nothingness leads to a number of implications which, although all-pervasively present in the Christian tradition, have not always been fully recognized.

A first consequence of this is the fact that the Augustinian-Anselmian model, in the event, does not allow for bipolarity. Yet, throughout the history of Christian thought, one is confronted with evil in the guise of the evil one, the devil, all of which abounds with connotations of bipolarity: the *antiquus hostis*, the ancient enemy, appears in the guise of the ultimate opponent and it seems hard if not impossible, both visually and intellectually, to face this enemy while thinking nothing of him. Even if it has to be acknowledged that Anselm's reflections on the status of devil and evil should first and foremost be seen as a dialectical, that is, a rather formalist, exercise, there remains sufficient reason for worry about the assessment of evil in the human existence. If, admittedly, Anselm has succeeded in thinking through the problem of evil, the sustainability of his conclusions in real life seems to be rather doubtful. Granted that the devil has really willed nothing, what is there to be feared from evil except a kind of a self-delusion? If evil is essentially to be reduced to nothingness, what else can fear of evil be called but a fear of ghosts?

A second consequence of Anselm's radical stance on evil flows from the first and concerns the status of imagination with regard to the devil and to evil. How

<sup>3</sup> Anselm of Canterbury, *De casu diaboli*, chap. 3, in *Anselmi Cantuariensis Opera omnia*, ed. by F. S. Schmitt, 2 vols (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1968), I, 237.

<sup>4</sup> *De casu diaboli*, chap. 3, p. 236.

hard and how distinct is human identity in face of the many metamorphoses of the devil? If the latter is not entitled to being, how should his many and quite 'substantial' appearances be explained? Of course, there is the difference of literary genres: thinking about evil as Augustine and Anselm have done is not the same as shaping the devil in a literary way when writing, for instance, a saint's life. Yet the absence of bipolarity as the outcome of a precise reflection on the status of the devil cannot be explained away by the liberties of literary and religious imagination. In one way or another this non-bipolarity has to be accounted for, even more forcefully so, it might be argued, in as much as the cover of imagination tends to hide from view one of the core tenets — or rather, perhaps, implications — of the Christian faith. What, then, to make of all those narratives so seemingly based on models of bipolarity: the saint versus the devil, good versus evil? How sustainable is their intellectual *and* narrative structure if the evil to be confronted and overcome in the end is not for real?

If we now turn to Gregory the Great, we meet someone who was successful in blending Augustinian elements with a rather wild imagination. At least, so the story goes. For the fact that in many respects — such as in the case of the doctrine of predestination — Gregory's thought can be considered a mitigated version of Augustine's makes him less of a 'philosopher', on the one hand, while allowing more room for the narrative visualization of the Christian faith on the other. As for the problem of evil, this mitigated stance would seem to produce a paradoxical effect. While the harshness of the Augustinian God who decides over good and evil would seem to take on a milder shape in Gregory the Great, the visibility of evil in the guise of the ever-present devil can be seen to increase considerably. In the older historiography this prominent presence of the devil and concomitant features of supernatural forces intervening in the process of human decision-making was seen as typical of the decline of civilized, ancient Christianity and the rise of magic. The classical definition of this development was given by Karl Heussi who, in his *Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte* — used by generations of students of church history — characterized the emergence of a type of Christianity bent on magic in Gregory's work as *Vulgärkatholizismus*.<sup>5</sup> And, although in modern research the anachronistic nature of such a qualification is taken to

<sup>5</sup> Karl Heussi, *Kompendium der Kirchengeschichte*, 10th edn (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949), p. 156: '[D]aher hat er auf die Gestaltung des vulgären Katholizismus entscheidenden Einfluss geübt [...]. Eine grosse Rolle spielen in der Gedankenwelt des "pater superstitionum" massive Wundergeschichten, Reliquien, Amulette, Zeremonien, Sakramente und Opfer, Märtyrer, Heilige, Engel, Erzengel und Teufel, Himmel, Hölle, Fegfeuer und Seelenmessen.'

be self-evident, Francis Clark's efforts to distinguish between authentic and in-authentic works of Gregory by branding the more 'primitive' writings such as the *Dialogi* as products of a later, less sophisticated period, testify to the awareness of possible tensions in Gregory's work between the more theological, Augustinian legacy on the one hand and less — or differently — focused storytelling on the other.<sup>6</sup> However, both Heussi's protestant and anachronistic characterization and Clark's speculative experiments with shifting dates fail to address the question as to how to deal with Gregory's thought and writing in its entirety. Consequently, they fail properly to assess the role of evil and the devil.

To get a better grip on Gregory's way of 'handling' the devil, let us first look at a more modern view on his supposed dependence on Augustine. In her fine study of Gregory, *Gregory the Great, Perfection in Imperfection*, Carole Straw emphasizes — rightly so, in my view — the differences between Gregory and Augustine rather than the correspondences. Thus she notices how Gregory distances himself from Augustine's 'psychology of sin', 'though he at times uses Augustine's words'.

While Augustine carefully separated body and soul, Gregory tends to view sin as arising from the conflict of body and soul, reason and sensation. For Augustine, carnality is a state of mind, and the flesh, man's mortal condition. But by setting spirituality in opposition to the body, Gregory causally links them. This interdependence supplies a warrant for asceticism, both because of the physical connection of body and soul through humours and, perhaps more important, the rhetorical opposition of pleasure and self-renunciation Gregory preaches to reform his flock.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to this philosophico-anthropological discourse Straw presents Gregory's ways of visualizing evil and demons as part and parcel of his *outillage mental* where evil and the human person are intermingled as described in the passage just quoted while at the same time offering room for the metamorphoses of evil. Here we face yet another paradox: the ever changing, metamorphic shape of the devil does not prevent his appearances as distinct, and, to the eye of the holy beholder, distinctly recognizable. It looks as if we have here another *Unverwechselbarkeit* at our hands. *Les extrêmes se touchent*: the most unsubstantial, ephemeral and metamorphosis-bent being manifests itself clearly and distinctly.

At times, these external forces, the demons, moths, and worms, seem to dwarf man in a cosmic drama of good and evil. Indeed, the struggle for self-control and discipline of the

<sup>6</sup> Francis Clark, *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great, Perfection in Imperfection* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), p. 133.

body is part of the larger question of man's control of his destiny. Just how much power does man have to shape his life? How effective are self-control and discipline in determining what happens to man in this life and the next? The devil looms large in the commission of sin, a measure of how greatly Gregory believes man is helplessly oppressed by his sinful unconscious nature. The devil is the tyrant enslaving man, but above all he is the enemy warring against mankind in particularly underhanded ways. He is the great deceiver laying traps for his victims, a hunter who ambushes his prey while they are least aware of danger. Changing form at will, he tailors his temptations to fit the individual weaknesses of his subjects. Man is constantly battered by the assaults of demons, as the *Dialogues* show us. But if Gregory feels the presence of demonic forces very keenly, he is weighed equally with respect for positive supernatural powers. Angels defend man from the adversary, surrounding him in the battle as mountains surround a valley. God's grace often protects man from evils, from external disasters and internal temptations.<sup>8</sup>

It is quite clear that this passage does not at all fit within an Augustinian-Anselmian framework. Rather than the devil in person, it is evil and the darkness of its unfathomability that pose such an enormous threat to the scrutinizing minds of both Augustine and Anselm. That darkness being what it is, they have little need for the exuberance of imagery. What is more, the devil's hold over man has been once and for all demythologized by Anselm. The density of his rationality leaves no room whatsoever for a third participant in the process of the Fall and Redemption. It is man and man alone who is responsible for his own behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

Yet knowing what we do about Anselm's rigorous intervention with regard to the power of imagery and mythology, one might wonder whether it is entirely fair to blame Gregory in retrospect for a development and tradition to which he has supposedly contributed so much. Does the fact that for Gregory body and spirit are both closer connected and more opposed than for Augustine leave enough room for a parallel image of man as governed by angels and demons? In other words, the question might be asked how new Anselm's rejection of the mythology of the devil's powers really is. Is it not the case that Gregory, like Augustine before him and Anselm after him, was somehow also confronted with the dubious nature of the bipolar model (spirit-body, angel-demon)? If so, Gregory must, in one way or another, also have faced the problem of metamorphosis, or, rather, its problematic status within Christian thought about identity and responsibility in the face of the ever-increasing abundance of imagery. In that case one wonders

<sup>8</sup> Straw, *Gregory the Great*, p. 137.

<sup>9</sup> *Anselmi Cantuariensis Opera omnia*, chap. 6, 'Cur deus homo', I, 53–58. For the old view as held by the church fathers among whom Gregory the Great figures prominently, see Schmitt's references, I, 52–58.

whether Straw's characterization of Gregory's worldview together with the entire interpretation of early Christian and medieval discourse, however attractive and plausible, would not somehow need correction. Perhaps all of us still suffer from a certain paradigmatic blindness in uncritically juxtaposing the idiom of imagery of evil and demons, angels and divine powers *and* the idiom of discursive reflection thereby ignoring the complexities of the different ways bipolarity manifests itself in images and imagination on the one hand and in discursive thought on the other. How to assess those differences or how to assess the interwovenness of word, thought, and image? The easiest way out of this dilemma would, of course, be to point to the differences in genre that would allow for varieties of expression. Yet, although, in line with the rules of ancient rhetoric, differences in genre undeniably shed much light on the variety of discourses used by Gregory, this would not be sufficient to deal with the problem of bipolarity. Neither the mannerist style of his letter writing nor the efficient simplicity of the *Dialogi* account for the degree to which bipolarity has to be taken to the letter or, for that matter, the degree to which the use of metamorphosis (as in the case of the devil) has to be reduced to simpler form and truer reality. Imagery too has to be examined as to its scope and status to the same extent that the scrutinizing mind has to be analysed as to its relationship to the world of imagery.

Before I discuss Gregory's *Dialogi* proper, I propose to make a detour in order to illustrate and clarify the problems described so far, in particular the problem of identity and metamorphosis. For that purpose I turn to a short story by Heinrich von Kleist, 'Die heilige Cäcilie'.<sup>10</sup> This novella is situated in the sixteenth century, the period of the early Reformation, in particular, the iconoclastic revolts of the 1530s. The story goes as follows. A small group of Protestant hooligans sets out on a journey to Aachen with the stated purpose of causing trouble in one of the nunneries in that town. Upon hearing about the evil intentions of those men the nuns, for their part, fear the worst. Their only defence might be their wonderful music for which they are famous. But, unfortunately, their cantrix, sister Antonia, has taken ill. And since she has lost consciousness, there is no prospect of a rapid recovery. Yet at the moment the men are about to execute their evil plans the sister-conductor is seen to sneak into the church and, taking up the baton, elicits such wonderful and heavenly sound from the nuns' choir that the men sit motionless in their pews with their mouths agape. In fact, such a stupor has seized them that, after the service is over, they do not leave their seats but, as frozen statues, stay where they are. In the end the situation becomes untenable up to the

<sup>10</sup> Heinrich von Kleist, *Sämtliche Erzählungen und andere Prosa* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1984), pp. 288–302.

point that the would-be troublemakers have to be carried away to the local asylum. There they continue to live in the same state of blessed stupor, floating like spacewalkers in airless space. Their only activity is the daily singing of a nocturnal *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. After some years the mother of one of the 'patients', having learned of her son's whereabouts, visits the men. Struck by their sorry fate, she asks the abbess about the origins of the present state of stupor and is then told a quite different story about human planning and divine intervention. As for the abbess, she presents, in her own words, a superior, that is, a 'Roman Catholic' account of the events which will, she quite condescendingly assumes, be wasted on her protestant interlocutor. If the latter wants to have the full version of the story, she should realize that, from a retrospective point of view, it is not at all clear which person was responsible for the music. So much is certain that under no circumstances could it have been sister Antonia, since reliable witnesses confirmed that she never recovered from her state of unconsciousness and, consequently, had been utterly unable to get out of bed, walk to the church, and lead the choir.

Kleist's story is interesting for our subject since his 'Catholic' legend is in no way reminiscent of any romanticizing ideal of the Middle Ages (if we still consider an early Reformation story about a miracle as medieval). Nor is the story to be characterized as Gothic. It contains no hovering ghostlike elements so as to create a mood of horror and suspense. Horror there certainly is, albeit not Gothic-like in the shape of the threat of supernatural powers but, rather, as the absence of any decisive intervention of a divine miracle or human superachievement. Two contradictory versions of the events are offered, the one suggesting a miraculous recovery and reappearance of sister Antonia, the other emphasizing her bed-ridden status. Yet, from Kleist's narrative point of view, the abbess's show of superiority vis-à-vis the mother is not based on a truth claim with regard to her 'alternative' version or, for that matter, a rejection of the earlier one. Thus she cannot be said to compete with the sequence of events as presented by Kleist while relating them as the authorial, omniscient witness and recorder of history. It is not one or the other, either-or. At the same time, *tertium non datur*: at no stage in the story does Kleist suggest such a way out of the dilemma. In some inexplicable manner the story is stripped of supernatural, and even natural, excess and is turned into a story barren of 'events'. In other words, if there is a *tertium*, it manifests itself in the guise of absence, as in reality an 'excluded third'.

In my view this Kleistian approach can shed some light on the narrative style of Gregory the Great. It somehow touches on the circumventing and expansive movements with which angels and demons surround human protagonists. As a consequence, it might help us to refine Straw's attractive though straightforward picture of the devil's tyranny over men and the angels' efforts to defend the latter

from adversary. If I use the phrase ‘narrative style’ it is to stress the fact that just as, in a very concise fashion, Kleist’s story makes it abundantly clear that the happening — or not happening — of a miracle depends indeed on the narrative structure, so Gregory’s miracles and demonic-angelic appearances derive their existence and shape from the narrator. Saying this would be a truism if historical research had not traditionally tended to omit this narrative stage in order to jump to conclusions with regard to history and mentality proper. One of the features to vanish from sight in such a directly historical or psychological reading of the sources would be the presence of a subtle imbalance in the text that would interrupt the expectation pattern of the reader. I want to argue that part of Gregory’s way of narrating his little stories is precisely the technique of introducing subtle elements of imbalance as a result of which those stories cease to be straightforward accounts of supernatural interventions. As for Kleist, each and every of his stories abounds with such little distortions. In the particular case of the Cäcilie novella there is some irony involved since there the author presents us in a sense with a double distortion. For, if the focus is admittedly on the supermiracle as characterized above (the undecidability of the excluded third) that deranges the sequence of a ‘normal’ miracle story, this derangement is preceded by yet another attempt at creating disorder by the iconoclast, Protestant young men. Their silly attempt at creating havoc is so to speak sublimated in yet another, much stronger, derangement: the heavenly music that causes their metamorphosis into devout zombies. For, appearances notwithstanding, Kleist refuses to present us with the full facts of the case, thereby undermining the possibility of telling a full and complete story. Or, perhaps, we should phrase it differently and say that we are confronted with a fuller version than we can handle. The appearance of the choir mistress, Sister Antonia, and her subsequent directing of the music is told in equally realistic terms as the abbess’s account of the event according to which it is unknown who was the conductor, albeit certainly not Sister Antonia. So much is made clear by Kleist: there is no finger of God to be pointed at as an explanation of what has been going on but neither are we told whether Sister Antonia has really gained consciousness. This indecision is mirrored in the frozen image of the attackers. Have they gained or lost identity in their metamorphosis from attackers to harmless though devout simpletons? Has the devil been exorcized from them or do they serve their penitential prison sentence? As so often with Kleist, everything happens simultaneously. As a result, unfathomable depths of good and evil open up, destruction and well-being that leave the reader behind in awe and wonder.

After this detour let us return to Gregory. For the sake of brevity I concentrate on the second book of the *Dialogi*, the *Vita Benedicti*. It goes without saying that

in that *vita*, as in the other books of the *Dialogi*, the devil makes his appearance prominently and in multiform ways. Right at the beginning of the *vita*, the devil almost invisibly introduces himself teasingly by throwing a stone at the cable-lift along which Benedict, living in isolation on an inaccessible rock, is sent his daily portion of bread. This confrontation between the busily plotting devil on the one hand and steadfastness of the holy man on the other creates a special kind of literary liveliness. In this respect Gregory can be said to be rhetorically and didactically efficient. That does not mean, however, that what is at stake here can be called a power struggle pure and simple between good and evil, devil and angels. In other words, Straw's description, though basically correct, does not tell the whole story. Nor do explanations in terms of rhetorical distinctions such as the difference between a more mythologically oriented discourse on the one hand, and a more discursive theological one on the other, however valid in themselves, do justice to the multidimensional nature of the text. For that the question as to the overall impact of the text is too stringent. This overall impact, in its turn, cannot miss its effect on the reader, inviting the latter to handle the text as a life performance and allowing, for instance, for a reversal or, at least, a disruption of the *orde du discours*.

Let us test our claim of Gregorian subtlety and disruption and look at the following passage in which Benedict is teased by a little black bird:

One day when Benedict was alone, the tempter appeared: for a little black bird, commonly called a merle, began to fly about his face, and it came so annoyingly near the holy man's face that if he had wanted to do so, he might have seized it with his hand; but after he had given the sign of the cross, the bird flew away. However, upon the bird's return, there followed a terrible temptation of the flesh such as he had never experienced in all his life. The evil spirit placed before the eyes of his mind a woman whom he had once seen, and the visual memories of her shape inflamed the soul of God's servant with so great a fire that its flame of love could hardly be contained in his breast and, overcome with lust, he almost decided to forsake the wilderness when suddenly, with the help of God's grace, he returned to himself. Seeing many thick thickets of bushes and briars grow near that place, he took off his clothes and threw himself naked into the thorny and prickly bushes, and wallowed so long in them that he had wounds all over his body. By the wounds of his skin, he removed from his body the wound of his mind by turning lust into pain. And when, by way of penance he burnt outwardly, he quenched the fire within. Thus he conquered sin by moving the fire. As of that moment, as he himself told his disciples later on, all temptation of pleasure was so subdued that he never felt any such thing.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Vita Benedicti*, chap. 2 (= *Dialogi*, bk II), in *Gregorii Magni dialogi*, ed. by Umberto Moricca (Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1924), pp. 78–79.

I have quoted this passage in full to give an impression of Gregory's lively narrative style while at the same time the devil's metamorphoses are played out against the saint's steadfastness, however narrow the escape from temptation may be. And if the conversation partner, the deacon Peter, seeks a deeper understanding of this somewhat pictorial text, Gregory quite effortlessly comes up with the 'lesson' to be drawn from this scenic story:

It is clear, Peter, that in youth the temptation of the flesh is fervent; but as of the age of fifty the heat of the body becomes cold, for the souls of faithful people are holy vessels. Therefore, it is necessary for God's elect, when they are yet open to temptation, to be obedient and to serve, and to tire themselves out with obedience and labour. But when their mind has reached a more serene age and the heat of temptation is past, they are keepers of holy vessels because they then become doctors of the soul.

Nothing unusual so far, and both story and explanation seem to fit Straw's anthropological model of man's delivery from the devil's tyranny through the victory of spirit over flesh, a model, in other words, in which spirit and flesh are more causally linked, albeit in opposition, than with Augustine.

The next chapter, however, has a slightly Kleistian ring to it. It is about Benedict's *perspicuitas*, his seeing through events and evil plotting, and, consequently, his power to shape and reshape reality:

After this temptation had abated, the man of God produced much fruit from the crop of his virtues, like a piece of land well taken care of from which the thorns have been removed. And the outstanding quality of his life made him famous indeed. There was a monastery not far from the place where he was living and the abbot of that community had died. The entire congregation approached the venerable Benedict imploring him urgently to become their abbot. For a long time he put them off, declining the offer, warning them that his way of life and manners would not fit in with theirs. Yet, overcome in the end by their requests, he consented. However, when, once in charge of that monastery, he insisted that the regular, monastic life be observed which implied that none of the monks was allowed, as it used to be the case in the past, to deflect, through their illicit behaviour, from the path of the regular life either to the right or to the left, the monks became exceedingly angry and began blaming themselves for having chosen such an abbot since their wickedness could not be squared with his righteous rule. When they saw that under his rule unlawfulness was not to be tolerated they regretted having given up the life to which they had become accustomed and when it seemed hard to them to give up the old mentality and replace it by a new one — as it is always difficult to change bad habits for the virtuous life — they started plotting to kill him and, after some deliberation, decided to poison his wine. And when, according to custom, the glass containing the poisonous drink was offered to the abbot at the table, in order to bless it, Benedict put forth his hand and gave the sign of the cross whereupon the glass, being held at quite some distance from him, broke into pieces as if instead of the sign of the cross he had thrown a stone against the glass. The man of God understood immediately that the glass

contained the drink of death which could not sustain the sign of life. He rose up and, having assembled the brethren, he addressed them with a serene face and a quiet mind, saying: 'May the almighty God have mercy upon you, brethren. Why did you plot against me in this manner? What shall I say? Did I not tell you beforehand that your and my way of life were incompatible? Go and look for an abbot with your mindset. As for me, after what has happened, I am no longer available'. Then he returned to the place of his beloved solitude, and, alone before the eyes of the supreme Spectator, he dwelt with himself/*habitavit secum*.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout this passage, instability is countered by the execution of discipline on the part of the saint. It is a laborious circumvention of plotting versus the gesture of simplicity. Just as Benedict graciously allows the black bird to fly away instead of seizing it, so the simple sign of the cross suffices to scatter the glass containing the poisoned wine, thereby causing evil to vanish into thin air. All the saint can do is turn his back on such instability and return to his cherished hermitage where he will 'dwell alone with himself [*habitare secum*] in the sight of his Creator'.<sup>13</sup> To 'vanish into thin air' is indeed the right expression as a radical and more ethereal version of the flight of the black bird. Yet what we do not have here is a well-described picture of personal identity. In fact, as for personal identity and its *Unverwechselbarkeit*, its unchangeable kernel, the reader is left with quite a messy picture. Humans turn out to be quite open to the influence of forming and deforming passions and other overpowering and disquieting forces as a result of which the Gregorian human will, surrounded by devils and angels, appears to be no less weak and vulnerable than Augustine's more barren inward self. As a consequence, Benedict's *habitare secum* cannot be based on a bipolar opposition between his stable, 'Stoic' ego and his black assailant. It is *sui generis*.

But what does this *sui generis* mean? That is the question, and it is no wonder that it is raised in urgent terms by the deacon Peter: 'minus patenter intelligo, quidnam sit, "Habitavit secum"' (I do not quite understand the exact meaning of the expression 'dwelling with himself'). Are we faced here with the problem of personal sustainability constituted from an untouchable centre? Not directly, although, as Gregory argues in his reply to Peter, the opposite, the 'not-dwelling with oneself' is no doubt linked to unrest. 'For so often as by unstable thought we are lifted too far outside ourselves, we remain ourselves, and yet we are not with ourselves because we are wandering [*vagamur*] into strange places without having

<sup>12</sup> *Vita Benedicti*, chap. 3, pp. 89–91.

<sup>13</sup> For the philosophical origins of this concept and its appearance in Persius's fourth *Satire* see Pierre Courcelle, '*Habitare secum* selon Perse et selon Grégoire le Grand', *Revue des études anciennes*, 69 (1967), 266–79.

a clear sight of ourselves.' This point is further illustrated with the help of the story of the prodigal son:

Or shall we say that that person was with himself, who went into a far country, and after, as we read in the Gospel, he had spent the portion which he had received, he was glad to 'join as a citizen to that country, to feed swine, and would have fain filled his hungry belly with the husks that the swine did eat'.<sup>14</sup> Yet, later on, when he thought with himself of those goods which he had lost, it is written of him that, 'coming to himself, he said: 'How many servants in my father's house have bread enough to spare'?<sup>15</sup> If then, he was with himself, whence did he come himself [*unde ad se rediit*]?<sup>16</sup>

Not without reason does Gregory elaborate on the theme of the *habitare secum*. For what is so striking about the example of the prodigal son is the fact that at first glance it is hard to distinguish his story from Benedict's failed excursus into the world of irregular monasticism. 'Si igitur secum fuit, unde ad se rediit?' (If, then, he dwelt with himself, from whence did he return to himself?). While making the gesture of moving from the safe haven of his hermitage to the monastic space of evil people, Benedict has in fact continued to dwell with himself. In that respect the excursus into irregular monasticism has been no real interruption, and, rather served to intensify his desire for regularity inside himself:

And for that reason I said that this venerable man dwelled with himself, because always taking care of himself attentively, he always envisioned himself in the sight of his Creator, always examining himself and never did he lower himself so as to move the eyes of his mind outside himself [*extra se mentis suae oculum non divulgavit*].

The *rediit* functions as a powerful image containing a motionless movement. Small and atomic at first sight, it turns out to tell a dramatic story of return *and* departure in which end and beginning coincide. Of course, within that movement one can 'leave oneself under oneself' (*se sub se reliquit*) in the rapture of contemplation. But that is quite different, as we shall see, from the spatial and temporal alienation on the part of a sinner such as the prodigal son who has left himself.

For Gregory the enigma of return (*redire*) is implied in the way he narrates his story while addressing the question, how can someone return who has not really gone away? If we take a closer look at the intricacies of this question, we slowly grasp the way Gregory applies his non-bipolar model to both his narration and

<sup>14</sup> Luke 15. 14–16.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 15. 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Vita Benedicti*, chap. 3, pp. 81–82.

his meditations on that narration. At the same time we learn to understand why metamorphoses are being blocked. As for the devil, he begins at some point, he leaves and returns, *multiformis*, but never in such a way that Peter's question with regard to Benedict's returning to himself without having left ('si igitur secum fuit, unde ad se rediit?') could ever be asked of him as well. As a result, unlike the saint, the devil will never be able to (re)turn into himself (*in se reversus*) without having been away. Therefore he will never be able to shape himself as a mere counter-image, as a straight and equal opponent of the saint as if he would have the same rights and claims to existence and, hence, be free to behave antagonistically in as full and complete a manner as the saint is free to behave constructively. In other words, he will never really succeed in bringing about a real metamorphosis. Only on that condition can light be shed on the problem of self-loss and self-sustenance. For the saint whose stability keeps eluding the *antiquus hostis* in spite of the devil's multiform efforts to get a grip on his opponent may derive his strength from the non-bipolar nature of his existence. But this does not mean that non-bipolarity is based on an unshakable identity. It is precisely the *in se reversus* that prevents the saint from taking on the guise of Stoic *ataraksia* and *apatheia*.<sup>17</sup> In the face of diabolic attacks the saint is indeed untouchable since the devil on his part fails to analyse the real nature of someone 'who has returned into himself', and precisely while 'being with himself' capable of constant and immediate (*protinus*) perspicuity. Yet, within this superior self, the saint is utterly fragile and vulnerable, facing the ever looming possibility of self-loss. As mentioned above, for Gregory there are two ways of losing oneself (*extra nos ducimur*). First, there is the *lapsus* as in the case of the prodigal son and his *vagatio mentis* as a result of which he *sub semetipsum cecidit*, and, second, there is the way of losing oneself in ecstasy which causes the mind to transcend itself. *Uterque ergo ad se rediit*, in either case the mind returns to itself, the sinner from the despondency of his self-alienation back to his own heart, the ecstatic from the heights of his contemplation to his former existence as an ordinary person.

This Gregorian picture of self-loss and self-fulfilment is far removed from an anthropology that departs from a stable and static centre within the self from which the influence of angels and demons is assessed and governed. It is precisely the absence of such a centre as a materialization of the *habitare secum* that lends

<sup>17</sup> See Colish, *The Stoic Tradition*, p. 266: 'In this life, for Gregory, the consequences of sin will prevent man from combating vice and acquiring virtue either autonomously or once and for all. Man's moral struggle is constant and he can never be assured that the conquest of one vice will free him from attack by another.'

a peculiar shape to both Gregory's thought and imagination. For this lack of centre coincides with a way of thinking and seeing on which the moulding of both word and image is based. By 'moulding' I do not simply mean that, in the *Dialogi*, the saint is given a perspicuity through the perspective of which the reader is invited to assess the efficacy of saintliness. That would still be too general a way of viewing the matter.

What happens in Gregory's text and thought is much darker and much more compelling than that. Where both insubstantial metamorphosis and bipolarity are blocked, all that remains is an act of pure seeing which ignores the distinction between the person who sees and that which is being seen to the extent of creating a unique kind of metamorphosis which reinforces rather than diminishes identity. After having told the lively events in the life of Benedict, Gregory as it were contracts it all, at the end of the *vita*, in a fireball of sorts:

Standing at the window in prayer to Almighty God, in the dead of night Benedict suddenly gazed and saw light poured down from on high that cast away all night's gloom and blazed forth with such splendour that this light illuminating the darkness would have been brighter than day. The whole world was brought before his eyes, gathered together, as it were, in a single ray of light [*velut sub uno solis radio collectus*].<sup>18</sup>

In reply to Peter's question — Peter's role is that of the straight man — how it is possible 'to see the whole world', Gregory uses terms that fit the visual parameters of someone who 'dwells with himself':

To the soul that sees the Creator every creature is limited [*angusta*]. To anyone who sees even a little of the light of the Creator everything created will become small, because in the very light of the intimate vision the inner reaches of the mind are opened up [...]. When the soul is rapt above itself in God's light, it is enlarged in its interior [...]. What wonder is it then if he saw the world gathered together before him, he who was lifted up outside the world in the light of the mind? That the world is said to have been gathered together before his eyes is not because heaven and earth was contracted but because the intellectual soul of the one who saw was enlarged.<sup>19</sup>

The excess of light in this passage is no guarantee for personal sustainability and the absence of self-loss. On the contrary, a subtle gaze is required in order to see through this overpowering image and descry the contours of person and personalities, whether good or evil. In other words, within this fireball special skills are required for a simultaneous reading of the stories of the return of the prodigal son

<sup>18</sup> *Vita Benedicti*, chap. 35, p. 129; trans. by Bernard McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1994), p. 71.

<sup>19</sup> *Vita Benedicti*, chap. 35, p. 130; trans. McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, p. 72.

and the return of the saint. Of course, there is no doubt that the liberated soul returns from its *raptus* just as the sinful soul returns from its *voyage au bout de la nuit*. The *raptus* is not permanent and neither is the *vagare* of the sinful soul. If we read back all the 'stories' and vicissitudes of Benedict's life from the retrospective viewpoint of this nocturnal vision at the window, the saint appears in his unique and, it should be added, his fathomless solitude. The stories told of his life are not stories *about* him. Much less are they stories *about* his struggle with the devil and demons. Such is the effect of the *habitare secum* resulting in the seeing of a miniscule world from the perspective of an enlarged soul. Here Kleist and his musical story come in. And so do his inconsequential storylines as well as his inner worldliness. What comes to the surface in Gregory's narration is the electrifying power of a story and an imagination whose driving force lies in the touching of a moment of light and darkness beyond good and evil yet not beyond worldly reality: *mundus sub uno radio collectus*.

# THE LOMBARD, BANDINUS, AND VACARIUS: CHRISTOLOGICAL NIHILIANISM AND THE ANGLO-NORMAN REALM

Jason Taliadoros

## *Background*

Marcia L. Colish's magisterial two-volume work on Peter Lombard (c. 1095/1100–1160) has introduced a new generation of scholars to the importance of the 'Master of the Sentences' and his influence on the practice of theology by schoolmen and intellectuals in the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> More than any other scholar before her, Colish analysed the intellectual currents that led Peter to compose the *Sententiae*, the contemporary views with which this work engages in dialogue, as well as the 'followers' of Peter who purported to disseminate the Lombard's ideas after his death. Two observations characterize Colish's portrayal of the Lombard. The first is her notion that Peter was an exemplar of the 'thoroughgoing professionalism' that marked theologians of the period.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, she pointed to Peter's meticulous citing of quotations from biblical, patristic, and contemporary sources, and his attention to accurately recording the location and identity of these authorities, as well as his systematic and ordered approach to ordering knotty theological and sacramental issues. The second is her refusal to accept that the Lombard was a Christological nihilianist, that is, a proponent for the theological proposition that Christ as man was not *aliquid*. In this, she explains, the Lombard was tainted both by his own reluctance

<sup>1</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, ed. by A. J. Vanderjagt, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 41, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 73.

to explicitly state a positive explanation of the hypostasis and by his guilt by association with his followers, who tended to 'radicalize' his views and so represent them as supportive of the Christological nihilianist position.<sup>3</sup>

This paper challenges the validity of these two positions by considering them in the very different context of Anglo-Norman intellectual dialogues. The thoroughgoing professionalism, which characterized the works of Peter and his peers in the Parisian scholastic environment, I argue, made its way into an English atmosphere, which adapted and applied it in new and different directions. I suggest that the reception of Peter Lombard and his followers' ideas outside the Parisian circle of 'professional' learned and systematic theology has for too long been overlooked. Further, this paper posits the notion that the Lombard's followers played a role in the dissemination of these theological debates to non-Parisian intellectual communities, such as that found in Anglo-Norman England. The two key figures in this reception were, respectively, Master Bandinus (fl. mid-twelfth century), one of the Lombard's earliest abbreviators, and Master Vacarius (c. 1115/20–c. 1200), the renowned lawyer and lesser-known theologian who found lifetime employment in the English episcopal *ecclesiae* of Canterbury and York. This paper argues, further, that Vacarius has been misunderstood insofar as his theological writings have been concerned.

The state of play in scholastic theology after the mid-twelfth century centres on Peter Lombard, who was born in Novara in Lombardy, northern Italy, and probably educated at Lucca under Master Otto, author of the *Summa sententiarum*, a major cotemporary source for Peter.<sup>4</sup> The final edition of the Lombard's *Sentences* can be dated to the years 1155–57, and it was likely taught for the first time in the academic year 1157–58.<sup>5</sup> The organization of his sentence collection broadly follows the 'historical' model implemented by Hugh of St Victor, and adopted by Otto in his *Summa sententiarum*. In the first book Peter treats the Trinity, God's attributes, Providence, predestination, and evil; in the second, he deals with Creation, the angels, the demons, the Fall, grace, and sin; the third

<sup>3</sup> Marcia L. Colish, 'Christological Nihilianism in the Second Half of the Twelfth Century', *Recherches de théologie anciennes et médiévale*, 63 (1996), 146–55.

<sup>4</sup> Philipp Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 34. There were two dominant theological traditions in the twelfth century. First, Hugh of St Victor emphasized an historical account of theology which followed the narrative structure of the Bible. The second was Peter Abelard's more theoretical and dialectic approach, which looked more 'rationally' at its subject matter, that is, more explicit use of philosophy in theological matters. The Lombard took a middle line between these two approaches: Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, pp. 28–29.

<sup>5</sup> Colish, 'Christological Nihilianism', p. 25.

book deals with the Incarnation of the Word, as well as the Redemption, the virtues, and the Ten Commandments; the fourth and final book treats the Sacraments and last things.

His was not the only sentence collection of the mid-twelfth century. Contemporary with the Lombard was another scholar intent on the idea of a book of sentences, namely Robert of Melun (b. late eleventh century–d. 1167). He produced his *Sentences* between the mid-1150s and 1160, in a double redaction.<sup>6</sup> This work attempted to reconcile Abelard and Hugh,<sup>7</sup> and to attack Gilbert of Poitiers.<sup>8</sup> Robert, it seems, completed only the first and less than half of the second planned book of *Sentences*;<sup>9</sup> in Colish's words, therefore, it never gave the Lombard a 'run for his money'.<sup>10</sup> Another work, the *Libri secundae summae abbreviato*, has been attributed to Robert of Melun by Fritz Anders, but this is disputed by Martin.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 72.

<sup>7</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, I, 30–33.

<sup>8</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 72.

<sup>9</sup> See the plan in Martin's introduction to fascicle 21, pp. ix–x, and the table of *capitula* at pp. 59–156: Robert of Melun, *Sententiae*, in *Oeuvres*, ed. by Raymond M. Martin and R. M. Gallet, *Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, Études et documents*, fasc. 13, 18, 21, 25, 3 vols in 4 (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, 1932–52), III. Fascicle 21 contains Book I, Parts I–II (pp. 159–307), and fascicle 25 (co-edited with R. M. Gallet) contains Book I, parts III–VI (pp. 1–328). Book II, completed by Robert, remains unedited; it contains a discussion of 'The Incarnation as Mystery' (bk II, pt II, chaps 1–8), 'Why Did God Become Man? Redemption' (chaps 9–32), 'Christ's Human Nature' (chaps 33–72), 'The Virgin Birth' (chaps 73–83), 'Christological Difficulties' (chaps 84–109), 'The State of Christ during the Three Days after his Death' (chaps 190–204), and 'Christ's Descent into Hell; Hell and Purgatory' (chaps 205–13). Rosemann and Colish source Robert's Christology from Martin's plan in fascicle 21, and so do not deal with the text itself. Nielsen, however, uses Anders's edition of Book II, supplementing it with references to Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque municipale (BM), MS 121 (he himself questions whether Robert composed it): Laug Olaf Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Gilbert of Porreta's Thinking and the Theological Expositions of the Doctrine of the Incarnation during the Period 1130–1180* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), pp. 85, 73, 111, 112–14, 234 n. 19; cf. Robert of Melun, *Libri secundae summae abbreviatio*, in *Die Christologie des Robert von Melun*, ed. by Fritz Anders, *Forschungen zur Christlichen Literatur-und Dogmengeschichte*, 15.5 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1927), p. 150.

<sup>10</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 73, citing Raymond-M. Martin, 'L'Oeuvre théologique de Robert de Melun', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 15 (1920), 464–77 (p. 489).

<sup>11</sup> Robert of Melun, *Libri secundae summae abbreviatio*, pp. 1–130; cf. Robert of Melun, *Quaestiones de divina pagina*, in *Oeuvres* (see n. 9, above), I, pp. xii–xiv. Martin's reasoning was

There were several features of the professionalism that characterized the Lombard's sentence collection. There was an attention to accurate attribution and identification of sources and quotes, as already mentioned, and a systematic structure of *quaestio*, *distinctio*, and *capitulum* (often in rubrics).<sup>12</sup> This new attention to sources also coincided with debates on the use of theological language: after questions about words used of God at Sens in 1141 and at Reims in 1148, debate seems to shift in the mid-twelfth century to defining the person of Christ. First, did the terms *substance* and *person* have a different meaning in relation to the deity than to created beings? Second, how appropriate was the Aristotelian language of accident, including relation, to the deity?

This concern over the use of theological language is best exemplified in the conciliar debates in the 1160s and 1170s, which focused on a discussion of the hypostatic union by the Lombard in distinction 6 of Book III of his *Sentences*. In this distinction Peter Lombard summarizes three opinions of the nature of the hypostatic union, each of which attempted to theorize the union of divinity and humanity inhering in Christ.

The first of these views, labelled the 'assumptus homo' theory, has been linked with Hugh of St Victor. Hugh set out his ideas on the hypostatic union in his *De sacramentis christianae fidei* (1137).<sup>13</sup> Hugh's explanation holds that God as the second person of the Trinity, or the Word, assumed or absorbed the 'whole man' (*totus homo*), that is assuming at the same time (*simil utrumque assumpsit*) both humankind's body and soul. In this way, the Word assumed not a 'person' but man's nature in a person. The body and soul were united together in a person, but only at the very moment of the Incarnation and not before.<sup>14</sup> Hugh's ideas

based on the fact that the *Summae abbreviatio* contained matters not found in manuscripts of the larger *Sententiae*. Nielsen overcame this problem, however, by citing the *Libri secundae summae abbreviatio* from Anders's edition, adding the folio references from the BM, MS 121 of the *Sententiae*.

<sup>12</sup> Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 73; Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 25; cf. Marie-Dominique Chenu, 'The Masters of the Theological Science', in Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, trans. by Jerome K. Taylor and Lester K. Little (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997; repr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 270–309.

<sup>13</sup> Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 173C–618B (especially Book II).

<sup>14</sup> '[H]ominem Deus [i.e., Verbum] assumpsit, totum assumpsit; [...] Itaque quando hominem assumpsit, simul utrumque assumpsit. Assumpsit autem carnem et animam, id est hominem, naturam non personam. Neque enim assumpsit hominem personam; sed assumpsit hominem in

were closely followed in the anonymously composed *Summa sententiarum* (c. 1138–42).<sup>15</sup> This view asserted that the Word of God in becoming man became *aliquid*, ‘something’ or ‘something else’ in the Incarnation, since the second person in the Trinity assumed a body and soul to become identical with him and thereby a concrete reality. It became regarded as ‘orthodox’ in subsequent papal councils from the mid- to later twelfth century, before a new orthodoxy was established in the thirteenth, particularly at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

The second view, called the ‘subsistence’ theory, was popularized by Gilbert of Poitiers. It appeared to deny that God as man was something, since human nature, although it ‘subsisted’ in the second person of the Trinity as body and soul, was not intimately united to the Word. The third view, widely ascribed to Peter Lombard, although he never explicitly states such a view, became known as the *habitus* theory. It described the human nature in Christ as connected to the second person of the Trinity, *secundum habitus*, in a relationship akin to the wearing of a cloak that Aristotle had used as one of the nine attributes in his *Categories*.

In the years following the publication of the *Sentences* (1155–57), the issue of Christological nihilism arose in conciliar discussions of theological orthodoxy. In the conciliar debate at Tours in 1163, Alexander III heard two propositions which suggested that Christ as man was not ‘something’: first, that Christ was not *aliquis homo* and, second, that Christ as man was not an *aliquid*.<sup>16</sup> The council did not condemn either.<sup>17</sup> Even when Gerhoch of Reichersberg intervened following

personam. [...] Ideo vero personam non assumpsit, quia caro illa et anima illa priusquam verbo unirentur in personam, non erant unita ad personam’: Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, II.9, PL, CLXXVI, cols 393D–394A.

<sup>15</sup> Anon., *Summa sententiarum*, in PL, CLXXVI, cols 42–174. Note Nielsen’s bibliography regarding two issues: first, whether the work was written by Hugh of St Victor; and, second, whether it was written before or after Hugh’s *De sacramentis*: Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy*, p. 196 n. 13. On the *Summa sententiarum* generally, see Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 63–65, 115–19; Heinrich Weisweiler, ‘La “Summa sententiarum” source de Pierre Lombard’, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 6 (1934), 143–83; F. Gastaldelli, ‘La *Summa sententiarum* di Otto di Lucca: conclusione di un dibattito secolare’, *Salesianum*, 42 (1980), 537–46; David E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard: The Influence of Abelard’s Thought in the Early Scholastic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 198, 212; Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy*, p. 229.

<sup>16</sup> John of Cornwall, *Eulogium ad Alexandram Papam*, in ‘The *Eulogium ad Alexandram Papam tertium* of John of Cornwall’, ed. by Nikolaus M. Häring, *Mediaeval Studies*, 13 (1951), 253–300 (p. 257).

<sup>17</sup> ‘Utra uero pars disputantium in pugna uerborum preualuerit, nescio’: John of Cornwall, *Eulogium*, p. 257. Häring notes that scholars have erroneously attributed to this council (a) the

the council, in 1164, the Pope did not make a determination on the issue, but instead ordered that such matters not be debated.<sup>18</sup> Then, at a large meeting of scholars in December 1164 at Sens, Pope Alexander III forbade all 'vain theological discussions' and enjoined the Bishop of Paris to enforce this across all France, at the same time approving a *sententia* relating to the glory of the 'assumed humanity', which recognized that Christ insofar as he was man was 'something'. This language is reminiscent of that used by Gerhoch in his *De gloria et honore filii hominis*.<sup>19</sup> The Lombard was first accused of Christological nihilianism in May 1170, when Alexander III's decretal letter to Archbishop William of Sens ('William of the White Hands') proscribed the teaching of the 'perverse doctrine' of Peter Lombard which taught that Christ as man was not *aliquid*.<sup>20</sup> But, in a later decretal to William (now Archbishop of Reims) in February 1177, the Pope confirmed his disapproval of the doctrine of Christological nihilianism, without linking this error to the Lombard. Alexander proscribed the teaching of Christological nihilianism in Paris, Reims, and surrounds under pain of anathema.<sup>21</sup> Even at the Third Lateran Council of 1179, with Alexander presiding, there was

condemnation of Peter Lombard's views on the natures of Christ and (b) Alexander's condemnation of Christological 'nihilism': Nikolaus M. Häring, 'The Case of Gilbert de la Porrée Bishop of Poitiers (1142–1154)', *Mediaeval Studies*, 13 (1951), 1–40 (p. 37 n. 3).

<sup>18</sup> Alexander III, *Epistolae* 242 and 243, in PL, CC, cols 288–89; *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*, ed. by P. Jaffé, W. Wattenbach, S. Loewenfeld, F. Kaltenbrunner, and P. Ewald, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Leipzig: Veit, 1885–88; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1956), II, no. 11011–12.

<sup>19</sup> 'Ipso anno [1164] [...] Alexander papa convocatis in unum scholasticis et quibusque litteratis in ipsa vigilia nativitatis domini [...] condemnavit et omnino interdixit omnes tropos et indisciplinata questiones in theologica, Parisiensique episcopi sub obedientia praecepit, ut per totam Franciam eas compesceret. Sententia autem de gloria hominis in Deum assumpti et in Deum nati approbata est ibi papa ac roborata [...]': *Annales Reicherspergenses*, MGH, Scriptores, 17 (1861), p. 471, cited in Jean Châtillon, 'Latran III et l'enseignement christologique de Pierre Lombard', in *Le Troisième concile de Latran (1179): Sa place dans l'histoire*, ed. by Jean Longère (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1982) pp. 77–90 (p. 82 n. 30).

<sup>20</sup> Alexander III, *Cum in nostra*, in *Cartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, ed. by Heinrich Denifle and Emile Châtelain, 4 vols (Paris: Delalain, 1889–97), I, 4; PL, CC, cols 685B–C; *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*, no. 11806; *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, ed. by Heinrich Denzinger and Adolf Schönmetzer, 34th edn (Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1967), no. 749; Châtillon, 'Latran III', pp. 79–81.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander III, *Cum Christus*, in *Cartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, I, 8–9; *Regesta pontificum Romanorum*, no. 12785; *Enchiridion symbolorum*, no. 750.

no explicit condemnation of the Lombard and the Christological issue; indeed, the subject was not broached at all.<sup>22</sup>

Noteworthy in these conciliar debates are three related features. The first observation is the caution and reticence by Alexander III and others in explicitly identifying the Lombard as a Christological nihilianist. Alexander's 1170 letter is the only explicit instance of church 'authorities' linking Peter to this error. Second, and at the opposite extreme, is the lack of caution, indeed the hostile polemic, of others in linking Peter Lombard with the now heretical doctrine, namely Gerhoch and Walter of St Victor (†1179/80). Walter attacked the 'four labyrinths', Peter of Poitiers, Peter Lombard, Peter Abelard, and Gilbert of Poitiers, for bringing ruin to theology. Walter expressed his disgust when, at the very moment the Third Lateran Council was to consider the allegations that Peter Lombard taught Christological nihilianism, several cardinals intervened to prevent this happening.<sup>23</sup> The third matter of note is the involvement of English masters in these encounters and, moreover, their perception of the Lombard as a Christological nihilianist. John of Cornwall, John of Salisbury, and Robert Cricklade are worthy of mention in this respect. John of Cornwall (c. 1125/30–before 1200) in his *Eulogium* — composed in two redactions: the first on the eve of the Third Lateran Council, in 1177–78, and the second during or after the council in 1179 — claimed that Peter Lombard had received the *habitus* theory from his master Peter Abelard, whose works he often diligently studied.<sup>24</sup> But, insofar as the Lombard accepted this viewpoint, explained John, he did so as an opinion accepted from the masters, not as his 'assertion' ('non esset assertio sua sed opinio sola').<sup>25</sup> John, therefore, seems to apologize for the Lombard's erroneous views. Robert of Cricklade, an Augustinian canon from Oxford, recounted an episode from a trip to Paris sometime between 1140 and 1160 (probably in 1158). He met Bishop Roger of Worcester, and asked him with whom he was studying theology. Roger replied that his teacher was Master Robert of Melun, to which Robert responded: 'I am very pleased, as I feared that you had been

<sup>22</sup> Châtillon, 'Latran III', pp. 83–89.

<sup>23</sup> Walter of St Victor, *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae*, in 'Le Contra quatuor labyrinthos franciae de Gauthier de Saint-Victor: Édition critique', ed. by Palémon Glorieux, *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 19 (1953), 187–335 (p. 201), who dates the work to before the Lateran Council of 1179, that is to the period 1177–78, while Châtillon believed it was written after 1179: Châtillon, 'Latran III', pp. 87–88.

<sup>24</sup> John of Cornwall, *Eulogium*, p. 254.

<sup>25</sup> John of Cornwall, *Eulogium*, p. 265.

ensnared by that heretic [Peter Lombard].<sup>26</sup> The unease that accompanied the move towards ‘academic professionalisation’ — the trend that Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae* exemplified in its application in the classroom — prompted John of Salisbury to write the *Metalogicon* between 1158 and 1159. In this work he describes the schools as transitioning from a broader use of the trivium towards a focus on specialization.<sup>27</sup>

### *The Lombard, Bandinus, and Vacarius on Christology*

But Colish suggests that the attribution of Christological error to the Lombard was due, in no small part, to his ‘followers’. Although it had long been accepted that the Lombard espoused a Christological nihilianist position, Colish’s revisionist view of the Lombard rejects this. Her view is partly based on evidence from two of his ‘disciples’, Stephen Langton (c. 1165–1228) and Peter Cantor (c. 1130–1197), both of whom also rejected Christological nihilianism.<sup>28</sup> Colish gave comparatively little attention to another disciple of the Lombard, and one of his ‘earliest’, Bandinus. Unlike Langton and Cantor, Bandinus explicitly supported the Christological nihilianist position in his *Sententiarum libri quatuor*. Bandinus’s work, and the context in which it was received in the 1160s following the Lombard’s death, have been little studied or understood.

Master Bandinus was a twelfth-century theologian known for little else than his work, the *Sententiarum libri quatuor*.<sup>29</sup> Whether he was a native of France, or like the Lombard, an Italian is unknown. If, as likely, he was a student of Peter Lombard at the cathedral chapter of Notre Dame, he was a product of the heady Parisian scholastic milieu in the late 1150s and 1160s. The textual history of the work is revealing. When Jean Eck discovered the text of the *Sententiarum*

<sup>26</sup> “‘Perplacet’, inquam “timebam enim, ne te teneret inviscatum hereticus ille””: Robert Cricklade, *Symbolum fidei*, in ‘English Learning in the Twelfth Century’, ed. by R. W. Hunt, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 19 (1936), p. 37; cited in Clare Monagle, ‘Christological Nihilism in the Twelfth Century: The Contested Reception of Peter Lombard’s *Sententiae*’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, 2007), p. 62.

<sup>27</sup> John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, ed. by J. B. Hall, CCCM, 98 (1991); Cary J. Nederman, *John of Salisbury* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), p. 63. See Monagle, ‘Christological Nihilism’, pp. 57–59.

<sup>28</sup> See Colish, ‘Christological Nihilianism’.

<sup>29</sup> For what follows in this paragraph, see E. Dhanis, ‘Bandinus’, in *Dictionnaire d’histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, ed. by Alfred Baudrillart, Albert Vogt, and Urbain Rouzière, 30 vols to date (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1912– ), VI (1932), 488–89.

*libri quatuor* in 1516 in a manuscript in an abbey at Melk near Vienna, he was so struck by the work's similarity to Peter Lombard's *Sentences* that he asked who had plagiarized whom ('quis cuculus [cuckold] fuerit, alienum sibi supponens partum').<sup>30</sup> Dom Chelidonius's first edition of the text in 1518 (Vienna, 1519) attributed priority to Bandinus over the Lombard, as did the second edition (Leuven, 1555, of which the Migne edition (PL) is a reproduction). It was only when Dom Pez discovered another manuscript (Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 9652), which had the title *Abbreviato magistri Bandini de Libro sacramentorum magistri Petri Parisiensis episcopi fideliter acta*, that proved definitively that Bandinus was the abbreviator. Rettberg confirmed this finding in his *Comparatio inter M. Bandini libellum et Petri Lombardi Libros IV sententiarum* (Göttingen, 1834), after conducting a detailed comparison between the two manuscripts. Finally, Denifle pointed to several titles from manuscripts attesting, like Pez, to the influence of the Lombard on Bandinus.<sup>31</sup> This textual history indicates what Colish surmised: that Bandinus was one of the 'earliest abbreviators' of the *Sentences*, composing his work no earlier than 1155 and most likely between 1157 and 1158.<sup>32</sup>

Possibly because of the meagre number of extant manuscripts, Bandinus's work has been perceived as having little influence in scholastic circles. Its possible provenance in Anglo-Norman England has not been considered at all. Another twelfth-century figure's writings on theology, and on Christology in particular, have received too little attention, namely the treatises of Master Vacarius. Vacarius's *Tractatus de assumpto homine*, his treatise on the assumed humanity in Christ, survives in but one manuscript.<sup>33</sup> So too does his *Liber contra multiplices et varios errores*, the final section of which deals in a similar fashion with the same topic.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Joseph De Ghellinck, *Le Mouvement théologique du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: Sa préparation lointaine, avant et autour de Pierre Lombard, ses rapports avec les initiatives des canonistes*, Études, recherche et documents, 2nd edn (Brussels: de Tempel, 1948), p. 312 nn. 4–5.

<sup>31</sup> Heinrich Denifle, 'Die Sentenzen Abaelards und die Bearbeitungen seiner Theologia vor Mitte des XII Jhs', *Archiv für Literatur- und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 1 (1885), 402–69 (p. 438).

<sup>32</sup> Colish, 'Christological Nihilianism', pp. 25, 149.

<sup>33</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus de assumpto homine*, ed. by N. M. Häring, 'The "Tractatus de assumpto homine" by Magister Vacarius', *Mediaeval Studies*, 21 (1959), 62–75. The manuscript is Cambridge, University Library, MS Ii.3.9.1773, fols 147<sup>v</sup>–152<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> Vacarius, *Liber contra multiplices et varios errores*, in *L'Eresia di Ugo Speroni nella confutazione del maestro Vacario: Testo inedito del secolo XII con studio storico e dottrinale*, ed. by Ilarino Da Milano, Studi e testi, 115 (Vatican City: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1945), pp. 471–583. The manuscript is Vatican City, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, MS Chigiano A.V.156.

Vacarius was a Roman jurist from Lombardy who came to England in the mid-twelfth century and worked in the ecclesiastical households of, first, Theobald of Canterbury, and then Roger and Geoffrey of York; he later acted as papal delegate for Alexander III in the late 1170s. He is best remembered, however, for his propaedeutic for English students of Justinianic Roman law, the *Liber pauperum*. Although his life and works, both in law and theology, have been the subject of study by scholars such as Southern and Peter Stein, the *Tractatus de assumpto homine* has been somewhat dismissed.<sup>35</sup> The following comments of Peter Stein are typical of this approach towards Vacarius:

Apart from the *Liber pauperum*, Vacarius wrote three treatises on theological and canon-law themes. The earliest work, the *Tractatus de assumpto homine*, was probably written in the 1160s. It concerns the controversy over the manner of union between the divine and human natures of Christ and aims to convince a friend, 'B', who had adopted the views of Gilbert de la Porrée and Peter Lombard, of the error of his ways. Vacarius shows *no familiarity with current theological debates*, and bases his argument on Augustine, Boethius, and civil law.<sup>36</sup>

This paper seeks to challenge this view of Stein and others, such as Southern. As Stein correctly points out, Vacarius's treatise deals with the subject of the hypostatic union, a matter of much discussion in Book III of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Less correct is his comment that Vacarius had no familiarity with contemporary debates.

The introduction to Vacarius's *Tractatus de assumpto homine* immediately informs the reader that Vacarius is engaging with his peers in an important debate. He states the following:

To his B., his Vacarius sends greetings. After the accustomed discussion between us on the man assumed [i.e., by the Word of God] I often had a discussion with several others following the paths of your opinion, who expounded the particular reasoning to me of that opinion. The essence of that opinion indeed is that it is not any man [*aliquis homo*] who intervened for us [and] whom God the-Word absorbed [*assumo*]: but rather He [God-the Word, i.e., the second person of the Trinity] assumed [in this person] a soul and a body only.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> See Jason Taliadoros, *Law and Theology in Twelfth-Century England: The Works of Master Vacarius* (c. 1115/20 – c. 1200), *Disputatio*, 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006) for a more comprehensive treatment of Vacarius.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Stein, 'Vacarius', in *Online Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.lib.monash.edu.au/view/article/28048>> [accessed 29 April 2006].

<sup>37</sup> 'Suo B. suus V(acarius) salutem. Post collationem de homine assumpto inter nos habitam saepe cum plerisque aliis vestigia opinionis vestrae sectantibus de re eadem tractatum habui, qui

Vacarius wishes to debate an opinion that he has heard. He addresses a certain B, who it seems, asserts an opinion which seems to deny that Christ as man is *aliquid*, that is, the position of Christological nihilianism. But whose opinion is Vacarius rebutting? That is, who is this individual whom he addresses as 'his B'? An attempt to identify this B, and thus the context of Vacarius's treatise, follows. The question he addresses, namely Christology, was of great moment to theological commentators across Europe in the mid- to later twelfth century, particularly in the works of the Lombard and Bandinus.

The theological project of the Lombard and Bandinus is similar in outline. Both schemas follow the systematic scholastic professionalism to which Colish refers. As with the Trinity, Creation, and the Sacraments, Bandinus follows the order of questions set out in the Lombard's *Sentences* when he deals with the topic of Christology.<sup>38</sup> His individual contribution to the sentence-collection genre is to abbreviate the Master of the Sentences. In their discussion of Christology in Book III, both the Lombard and Bandinus divide this topic into forty distinctions. Both authors deal with the topic of Christology, in parallel, through four important distinctions. Then, under the rubric, the 'being of Christ', the Lombard's distinction 5 deals with the precise mode of the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ, that is to say the issue of the 'hypostatic union'. This distinction, like Bandinus's distinction 5, asks 'Who assumed and what was assumed' in terms of nature and person. For both, distinction 6 seeks an explanation of the phrase 'God is man', which for the Lombard in particular is the opportunity to set out the three hypotheses. Then, in distinction 10, the

etiam rationem ipsius opinionis mihi exposuerunt praecipuam. Summa vero eiusdem opinionis ea est ut non sit aliquis homo qui pro nobis interpellat quem suscepit Deus-Verbum: sed animam et corpus tantum assumpsit': Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §1, p. 162. I am indebted to Constant Mews for his assistance in translating this difficult passage.

<sup>38</sup> Bandinus's work is divided into four books: Book I, 'On the Sacrosanct Trinity' (cols 971A–1028C); Book II, 'On the Creation of the World and the Fall of Man' (cols 1027D–1070D); Book III, 'On the Incarnate Word and the Restoration/Salvation of Man' (cols 1071A–1090B); and Book IV, 'On Ecclesiastical Sacraments' (cols 1090C–1112C). The reliance on the structure of Peter Lombard's four books of *Sentences* is clear. The Lombard's work is similarly divided: the first book ('On the Mystery of the Trinity') treats of God and the Blessed Trinity, of God's attributes, of Providence, of predestination, and of evil; the second ('On the Creation of Things, and the Formation of Spiritual and Corporeal Entities, and Many Other Matters Pertaining to These'), of the Creation, the work of the six days, the angels, the demons, the Fall, grace, and sin; the third ('The Incarnation of the Word'), of the Incarnation, the Redemption, the virtues, and the Ten Commandments; the fourth, of the Sacraments in general, the seven Sacraments in particular, and the four last things, death, judgement, hell, and heaven.

Lombard canvasses the *aliquid*-est issue, querying ‘Whether Christ insofar as he is man is *aliquid*’; Bandinus deals with this in distinction 8, although he has already predetermined the answer, namely ‘[t]hat Christ is not *aliquid* insofar as he is man’. I discuss this further below.

Vacarius’s *Tractatus de assumpto homine* and *Liber contra* are yet again more focused and polemical than Bandinus. The *Tractatus de assumpto homine* is no broad-ranging systematic survey of theology, nor is it in the sentence-collection genre. It is not designed to approach the theological project in terms of the grand human narrative from Creation to the End of Days (as the Lombard did in imitating Hugh of St Victor and Otto of Lucca), nor along the ‘rational’ lines of faith, charity, and the Sacraments (as per Abelard).<sup>39</sup> It lacks the structural rigidity and formalism of the Parisian works in its failure to systematically use *quaestiones*, *distinctiones*, or *capitula*. In addition, the *Tractatus de assumpto homine* lacks ‘formal’ or professional citing of authorities. Instead, it is a slightly polemical treatise on a particular topic, more discrete summa than sentence-collection. Although the *Liber contra* of Vacarius as a whole is more systematic, in the fashion of the Lombard, its treatment of Christology follows a similar plan to the earlier *Tractatus de assumpto homine*.

The ‘three-theories’ doctrine outlined by Peter Lombard in distinction 6 of Book III of his *Sententiae* has been much discussed.<sup>40</sup> It is important to understand how the issue arose. This question of the constitution of Christ’s personhood arose out of a need to reconcile the formulation of Chalcedon and the doctrinal writings of Boethius, both of which were considered to be orthodox and authoritative in the Christian tradition.<sup>41</sup> The Council of Chalcedon had declared, in 451, that Christ was one person in two natures. He was the second person of the Trinity, composed of mutually ‘imbricated’ human and divine natures. This idea of Christ’s personhood, as constituted only in the particular combination of human and divine natures that characterized his incarnation, was very different from the definition of personhood by Boethius, which was standard throughout the schools of Paris. It defined a person as an individual substance of a rational nature. According to Boethius, the key characteristics of personhood were indivi-

<sup>39</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 29.

<sup>40</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, in *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, ed. by Ignatius C. Brady, 3rd rev. edn, 2 vols in 3 (Grottaferrata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1971–81), III, d. 6–7 (II, 49–66); see Colish, *Peter Lombard*, I, 417–38; Luscombe, *School of Peter Abelard*, pp. 267–74; Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy*, pp. 243–79; Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, pp. 126–27.

<sup>41</sup> For the following paragraph, I am indebted to Monagle, ‘Christological Nihilism’, pp. 1–2.

duality and rationality. If the Boethian definition was followed, this would mean that what made a human a person was not the same as that which made Christ a person, since Christ's personhood was constituted in his two natures, while man's personhood was found in his rational nature. Doctrinally, Christ needed to be fully human to bring about the salvation of humanity, to make satisfactory reparation for the sins of Adam. Yet, how could he be fully human if his personhood was defined differently to that of humans? This was precisely the sort of contradiction that the Lombard wanted to resolve in the *Sententiae*.

Peter sets out the three scholastic explanations of this issue, which in fact related to the phrases 'God is made man' and 'God is man'. Indeed, the question arose as to whether by these phrases, or not, it could be interpreted that God was made *aliquid* or is *aliquid*. In discussing the issue as to whether Christ as man was *aliquid*, most commentators have translated *aliquid* as 'something'. Philipp Rosemann, however, translates *aliquid* as 'something else', on the basis of the word's etymology (*aliud quid*) and the ambiguities in the inflected nature of the Latin language.<sup>42</sup> The Lombard's dealing with the issue therefore, for Rosemann, centres on whether God, in becoming man, became something other than what he was. That is, he was most interested in explaining the 'mode' of the hypostatic union insofar as whether the divine nature of the Word became 'something else' other than it was previously in the Incarnation. This was the issue for Rosemann, rather than the question of whether the Word as man was a 'substance', namely the particular question of Christological nihilianism itself, which the Lombard dealt with later in distinction 10.<sup>43</sup> As Rosemann acutely observes, distinction 6 is the 'single most extended treatment of a particular point in the entire *Book of Sentences*', taking up seventeen pages in Brady's edition.<sup>44</sup>

The Lombard sets out the three hypotheses in his explanation of how God became man in the Incarnation. According to the first, or 'assumptus homo', view, the Lombard states:

Some people, in fact, say that in the Incarnation of the Word a certain human being was constituted from a rational soul and human flesh: out of which two every human being is constituted. And that human being began to be God — not, however, the nature of God, but the person of the Word.[...] Not, however, by a migration of one nature into the other, but with the property of each of the natures being preserved did it come to pass that

<sup>42</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, pp. 126–27.

<sup>43</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 238 n. 32.

<sup>44</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 127. Distinction 6 occupies pp. 49–59 of Brady's edition, that is, ten pages, not seventeen as Rosemann asserts.

God was that substance, and that substance was God [...]. And although they say that that human being [that is, Christ] subsists from a rational soul and human flesh, nonetheless they do not confess that it is composed of two natures, divine and human; nor [do they confess] that the two natures are parts of that [human being], but only soul and flesh.<sup>45</sup>

Now, according to the second or ‘subsistence hypothesis’, he continues:

The ‘sentence’ of others. There are, however, others as well, who agree partly with those [defenders of the first theory], but who say that that human being consists not only of a rational soul and flesh, but of a human and of a divine nature, that is of three substances: divinity, flesh, and soul. This [human being] they confess to Christ, and [they further confess] that He is only one person, who was simple only before the Incarnation, but in the Incarnation came to be composed of divinity and humanity.<sup>46</sup>

And then, according to the third, *habitus*, view:

A third ‘sentence’ of others. There are others, too, who deny not only that in the Incarnation of the Word a person was composed of natures, but also disavow that some true human being, or even some substance, was composed of soul and flesh here; but they say that these two — namely, soul and flesh — were united to the person or nature of the Word not in such a manner that from these two or from these three some substance or person was made or composed, but that the Word of God was clothed in these two as though in a garment so as to appear fittingly to the eyes of mortals.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 6, c. 2, trans. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 128; ‘Alii enim dicunt in ipsa Verbi incarnatione hominem quendam ex anima rationali et humana carne constitutum: ex quibus duobus omnis verus homo constituitur. Et ille homo coepit esse Deus, non quidem natura Dei, sed persona Verbi [...]. Non tamen demigratione naturae in naturam, sed utriusque naturae servata proprietate, factum est ut Deus esset illa substantia, et illa substantia esset Deus [...]. Cumque dicant illum hominem ex anima rationali et humana carne subsistere, non tamen fatentur ex duabus naturis esse compositum, divina scilicet et humana; nec illius partes esse duas naturas, sed animam tantum et carnem’: ed. Brady, p. 50.

<sup>46</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 6, c. 3.1, trans. Rosemann, p. 129; ‘Sunt autem et alii, qui istis in parte consentiunt, sed dicunt hominem illum non ex anima rationali et carne tantum, se ex humana et divina natura, id est ex tribus substantiis: divinitate, carne et anima, constare; hunc Christum fatentur, et unam personam tantum esse, ante incarnationem vero solummodo simplicem, sed in incarnatione factam compositam ex divinitate et humanitate’: ed. Brady, p. 52.

<sup>47</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 6, c. 4.1, trans. Rosemann, p. 129; ‘Sunt etiam et alii, qui in incarnatione Verbi non solum personam ex naturis compositam negant, verum etiam hominem aliquem, sive etiam aliquam substantiam, ibi ex anima et carne compositam vel factam diffitentur; sed sic illa duo, scilicet animam et carnem, Verbi personae vel naturae unita esse aiunt, ut non ex illis duobus vel ex his tribus aliqua substantia vel persona fieret sive componeretur, sed illis duobus velut indumento Verbum Dei vestiretur ut mortalium oculis congrueretur appareret’: ed. Brady, p. 55.

There has been debate in scholarship as to which view the Lombard supported, from his day to our own. The Lombard devoted a lengthy discussion to the second position, and the nature of this examination has led some to argue that he tacitly supported this position.<sup>48</sup> Even more so, however, scholars have attributed the third theory to him.<sup>49</sup> But in the text of the *Sentences* the Lombard expressly refuses to decide on any of them, concluding: 'What has been said above does not suffice to understand this question.'<sup>50</sup> By 'this question', certainly the Lombard does not mean the *aliquid*-est issue per se, but rather the mode of the hypostatic union. This becomes clearer when comparison is made to Master Bandinus.

Bandinus treats the same subject matter, although in a more abbreviated manner; his discussion in distinction 6 occupies about one column in Migne's edition, as opposed to Lombard's distinction 6, which occupies ten pages in Brady's edition. Bandinus begins with the meaning of the proposition 'God is a man and man is a God', explaining that 'from these things, which the Son of God took up, namely soul and flesh, no person of man was composed [from them]'.<sup>51</sup> Bandinus continues — and here he departs from the Lombard and makes explicit his support for the 'third' opinion — 'because, if in that, which is already a person, as Christ was, they [i.e., body and soul] come together, they assuredly do not make a person, but they only are in a relation of *habitus* to it [i.e., priesthood] [*sed tantum habentur ab ea*]'.<sup>52</sup> Just as a roof, tiles, and foundations, he adds, if already made, may be utilized (*adhibeo*) for a house, but do not make the house, but from that thing to which they are added, they are only in a relationship of *habitus* to it.<sup>53</sup> Just as in baptism, once someone is baptized, he or she may not purify. And so consecration, ordination, and dedication, those things which already share those rituals, do not increase by having been utilized for this purpose, that is, they confer nothing nor do they change, but are only utilized. In this way, therefore, soul and body are utilized for the Son of God just like clothing over limbs.<sup>54</sup> Thus,

<sup>48</sup> Palémon Glorieux, 'L'Orthodoxie de III Sentences (d. 6, 7 et 10)', in *Miscellanea Lombardiae: Pubblicata a chiusura delle celebrazioni centenarie organizzate in Novaara per onorare Pietro Lombardo* (Novara: Istituto geografico de Agostini, 1957), pp. 137–47 (p. 145).

<sup>49</sup> Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 130.

<sup>50</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 7, c. 3.3, trans. Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 130; 'Quod praedicta non sufficiunt ad cognoscendam hanc quaestionem': ed. Brady, p. 66.

<sup>51</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, col. 1074B.

<sup>52</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, col. 1074B.

<sup>53</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, col. 1074C.

<sup>54</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, col. 1074C.

Bandinus clearly sees the human nature in Christ as adventitious, or ‘accidental’ in the Aristotelian-Boethian sense. Of the Aristotelian-Boethian categories describing relation, it is the relationship of *habitus* that best describes this. Further, it is clear from this that the body and soul, when assumed by the second person of the Trinity, are separate and do not meet; thus, no ‘person’ can be assumed or absorbed. The second person of the Trinity is distinct because he only takes on the body and soul as *habitus*.

Bandinus continues: ‘For the Son of God is made man; [but] not so that he is essentially and truly man, as you yourself who are composed as an essence of your soul and body, but essentially and truly Son of God became man *secundum habitum*.’ This sentence epitomizes the *habitus* opinion, explicitly stated by Bandinus in a manner that the Lombard consciously avoids, thus radically separating the student from the master. Like the Lombard, however, Bandinus cites Augustine as authority for the *habitus* position, although the citation from Augustine’s exegesis on St Paul’s Letter to the Philippians. This was firm biblical corroboration for the *habitus* position: ‘In habit found as a man’ (*Habitu inventus est ut homo*; Phil. 2. 7).<sup>55</sup>

Under the rubric ‘Four kinds of *habitus*’, which mirrors the Lombard’s treatment of the four senses of *habitus* in distinction 6, Bandinus confirms his unequivocal *habitus* stance. Bandinus describes, however, the four ways that something may resemble (*accedo*) something else (*ad aliquid*), in order to be in a relation of *habitus* to it (*ut habeantur ab eo*). These four are: (1) something that changes but is not changed, for example, wisdom in a stupid person; (2) something that changes or is changed, for example, food in the stomach; (3) something that neither changes nor is changed, for example, a ring on a finger; (4) something that does not change but is changed, for example, clothing on a body. In this way, Bandinus explains, God did not change in the Incarnation/Assumption, but he became ‘in the similitude of man’, taking up true manhood, and ‘in habit found as a man’ (Phil. 2. 7). And when, therefore, it is said ‘God is man’, Bandinus concludes, *habitus* is predicated so that the meaning is ‘God is manhood’ or ‘God is having manhood’.<sup>56</sup> In contrast to the Lombard, Bandinus ignores the first and second theories and makes explicit his adherence to the third, or *habitus*, position.

<sup>55</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, cols 1074C, 1075A; cf. Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 6, cc. 5–6, ed. Brady, pp. 56–59. See Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, pp. 129–30.

<sup>56</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, cols 1074D–1075A.

Vacarius, too, seems unaware of these three arguments. He makes no mention of *habitus* in his treatise, leading many scholars to assume that he was unaware of these contemporary debates. But a clearer understanding of Vacarius and his writings reveals that this is not the case. He sets out a systematic explanation of the hypostatic union in a rubric and summary of his treatise in the following terms:

Concerning the *assumptus homo*, he is a substance subsisting [*subsistens*] from soul and flesh and a substrate [*subiectus*] to the properties of human and animal nature, but not a divine [substance]. And this [i.e., the *assumptus homo*] is a person, but is not properly called person when absorbed [*assumere*] [in the Incarnation]. And since the words ‘Christ’, ‘Lord of Glory’, and ‘Giant of a dual substance’ are words of two substances — and not [the word] ‘God’, on that account Christ — not ‘God’ not ‘man’ — is called one ‘person’ from a dual substance. And therefore God is truly and properly *aliquid* because he is a man.<sup>57</sup>

Vacarius here expresses the first of the Lombard’s theories, the *assumptus homo* position. Vacarius adds that the hypostatic union is ‘that incomprehensible and marvellous mode by which God becomes *that man who intervened for us*’, and which is harder to put into words than to understand, and far less accepted in the mind than as truth.<sup>58</sup>

In distinction 5, the Lombard and Bandinus discuss who assumes and what was assumed. In particular, they ask whether, in the Incarnation: (1) a person assumed a person, (2) a nature a nature, (3) a person a nature, or (4) a nature a person. They both reject (4) and (1). The reason for this, Rosemann explains, is that there was no human person to assume who existed before the conception.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> ‘De assumpto homine quod substantia sit ex anima et carne subsistens tam animalis quam hominis naturae proprietatibus subiecta, non autem divina, et quod homo sit persona, ipse tamen assumptus dicitur et non ipsa persona; et quod “Christus” et “Dominus gloriae” et “gigas geminae substantiae” duarum sint substantiarum nomina, et non “Deus”, et ideo ex duplici substantia Christus esse una persona dicitur, et non Deus, non homo ita dicitur; et quod Deus vere et proprie inde est aliquid quia est homo’: Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §6, p. 163, trans. in Taliadoros, *Law and Theology*, p. 164. The entire paragraph is in rubrics: Cambridge University Library, MS Ii. 3. 9, 1773. Håring notes that the ‘entire paragraph was a rubric summarising the tract’, but does not suggest that it was an interpolation (‘Tractatus de Assumpto Homine’, p. 163 n. 11). The suggestion that it was an interpolation, however, is given weight by the condensed structure of the paragraph, which differs from the remaining paragraphs in the treatise. Further, the paragraph immediately following the rubric returned to the notion of ‘perfect human nature’, a topic discussed in the paragraph immediately preceding the rubric. On Vacarius’s Christology, see Taliadoros, *Law and Theology*, pp. 158–213.

<sup>58</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §30, p. 171.

<sup>59</sup> Roseman, *Peter Lombard*, p. 125.

Bandinus and the Lombard accept (2) and (3), although these present problems. Both agree with (3) that the Word took on human nature, not a human person.<sup>60</sup> Further, both agree with (2) that a divine nature took on a human nature. For Bandinus this nature was the ‘form of God’ (*forma Dei*), while for the Lombard (citing John of Damascus) the divine nature became united with human nature, but did not become ‘flesh’ or other than itself.<sup>61</sup>

Vacarius shows an awareness of these discussions. Like the Lombard and Bandinus, he agrees that any explanation of the Incarnation must avoid the proposition that a ‘person’ is assumed by the Word.<sup>62</sup> Vacarius concedes that if what is assumed is ‘the one who intervenes for us’, then arguably a person is assumed, and this compelling argument needs to be rebutted.<sup>63</sup> In response, Vacarius states that the person of the *assumptus homo* was absorbed in the very moment of his own incarnation, even if he possessed the person of man before he was assumed.<sup>64</sup> Thus, simultaneously in the Incarnation, both a man and a person would begin to be God, with the Word absorbing not the person itself, but the man.<sup>65</sup> By this ‘juridical’ notion of personhood, Vacarius means that it is a ‘rule’ that greater things assumed lesser ones, such as the soul assuming the body in death, or, in everyday examples, a gem in a candelabra or the purple in a vestment assuming their respective lesser physical aspects.<sup>66</sup>

For the Lombard and Bandinus the rubrics to their respective distinctions reflect their differences in approach to the issue of Christological nihilism. The Lombard begins with the query ‘Whether Christ insofar as he is man is a person or *aliquid*’, while Bandinus begins with a statement of contention: ‘That Christ is not *aliquid* insofar as He is man’.<sup>67</sup> Peter summarizes the arguments, referred to earlier, that had led some contemporary theologians to the conclusion that Christ insofar as he as man was not *aliquid*: the main argument was that if Christ

<sup>60</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 5, c. 3, ed. Brady, p. 47; Bandinus *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 5, PL, CXCII, col. 1073B.

<sup>61</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 5, c. 1.12, ed. Brady, pp. 45–46; Bandinus *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 5, PL, CXCII, col. 1073C; Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, p. 126.

<sup>62</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §2, p. 162.

<sup>63</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §15, p. 165.

<sup>64</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §17, p. 166.

<sup>65</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §17, p. 166.

<sup>66</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §17, p. 166.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 10, c. 1, ed. Brady, I, 72; cf. Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 8, PL, CXCII, col. 105.

as man was *aliquid*, he was either a person, a substance, or something else (*aliud*).<sup>68</sup> But what else could he be, if not a person or a substance? If he was a substance, he could be either rational or irrational. But Christ would hardly be an irrational substance. A rational substance, however, is precisely that in which Boethius understands a person to consist. Therefore, Christ as man is a person. But, the Lombard's discussion continues, if Christ as man was a person, this person was either the third person of the Trinity or not. And Christ was a Trinitarian person; therefore, Christ as man is the third person of the Trinity, and Christ as human was God. But Christ as human cannot also be divine; therefore, Christ insofar as he is man must be something else (*aliud*). The Lombard rejects this line of argument, but fails to provide an alternative explanation.

Bandinus has no such hesitation in forming judgement on the matter. He states that the Son of God, 'by the manner in which he took on this manhood, was not made *aliquid*', that is, a person or a nature.<sup>69</sup> This was because there was no quaternity in the Trinity. Further, Christ subsisted 'in' or 'from' two natures or substances and Christ was not 'two' natures or substances, but became of another nature which he was not before. In support of this Bandinus quotes Origen and Augustine. 'The Son therefore is not *aliquid* insofar as he is man', he notes. Thus, Bandinus takes a bolder line than the Lombard, an unabashed nihilianist one.

Vacarius's stance on the *aliquid*-est issue is diametrically opposed to that of Bandinus. For Vacarius, Christ as man was *aliquid* because he was God by his nature and man by the Incarnation or 'Assumption', as revealed by his explanation of the *assumptus homo* previously cited. Vacarius asserts time and again

<sup>68</sup> Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, III, d. 10, cc. 1–5, ed. Brady, I, 72. For an overview, see Rosemann, *Peter Lombard*, pp. 131–33.

<sup>69</sup> 'Sciendum est autem quod Filius Dei, ex eo quod hominem suscepit, non est factus aliquid, hoc est, persona vel natura, quia nec quaternitas in Trinitate est, nec duae naturae Christus est, cum tamen scriptum sit: In duabus et ex duabus naturis vel substantiis subsistit Christus, non dicitur: quod duae sit, sed factus est alicujus naturae, cujus non erat prius. Secundum quod debet intelligi illud Origenis: Factus est sine dubio illud, quod prius non erat, hoc est, ejus naturae, Item illud: Alius est Dei Filius, alius est hominis filius, id est alterius et alterius naturae, secundum quod de Deo vel de homine natus est. Sic omnia quae in hunc modum dicuntur intellige. Non igitur Filius est aliquid secundum quod homo, nisi (secundum) unitatem personae notet. Haec enim dictio (secundum) hoc in sacramento, aliquando personam notat. Ut secundum quod homo, hoc est, is qui homo est, dedit dona hominibus. Aliquando vero naturam ut secundum quod homo, passus est, id est humanitas ipsa. Aliquando vero notat statum vel habitum, ut secundum quod homo, praedestinatus est, vel donatum est ei nomen sicut praedictum est': Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 8, PL, CXCII, cols 1075C–1076A.

that God as man was indeed *aliquid* in the Incarnation. He uses the word *aliquid* on some seven occasions to express this opinion.<sup>70</sup> In doing so, he expresses the classic Victorine position, or the *assumptus homo* position, in giving an affirmative explanation of the *aliquid*-est issue. In direct reference to the concept of *aliquid* as signifying ‘something else’, Vacarius alludes to the Boethian-Aristotelian understanding of epistemology, in particular the explanation of change and transformation. He notes that, although an entity may not be what it used to be, it may nevertheless still be ‘the same’, depending on whether its substance (that is, its matter), nature (that is, its form), or its essence, changed.<sup>71</sup> In the case of the Incarnation, Christ became two distinct substances (*aliud Deus et aliud homo*) by the property of the substance, but Christ remained one and the same by the personal property of the substances.<sup>72</sup> Thus, there is substantial change, but in one and the same person.

Noteworthy in the discussions by Bandinus and Vacarius on the Christological nihilianist issue is their focus on one aspect of the problem: whether or not the body and soul in the man assumed by the Word were united together. In other words, they sought an understanding of the composition of humanity (soul and flesh) in the second person of the Word. As discussed above, Bandinus states that, although these two components — soul and flesh — were taken up by the Son of God, no person was composed for them.<sup>73</sup> Bandinus’s position on the *habitus* relationship between the second person of the Trinity and the flesh and soul presumes that these two were not united in the *assumptus homo*. But, as Vacarius sees it: if ‘B’ or his followers support the notion that the assumed manhood comprised flesh and soul as separate things, then a number of problems followed thereupon. One problem was that there would be ‘nothing’ assumed: ‘For when we say that [...] the Word took up [*suscipio*] human nature or man, [it took up] nothing [*nihil*] unless we signify [that it took up] rational soul and human flesh with their union [*compage*] in one substance.’<sup>74</sup> For, although such dissenters, Vacarius adds, seem ‘to attribute to Christ an entire [human nature], in conceding to him a rational soul and human flesh, they nevertheless take away [*aufero*] from this entire [human nature] by denying that the substance of this [i.e., *assumptus*]

<sup>70</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §27, p. 170; §29, p. 171; and §30, p. 171.

<sup>71</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §28, p. 170.

<sup>72</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §29, p. 170.

<sup>73</sup> Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri quatuor*, III, d. 6, PL, CXCII, col. 1074B.

<sup>74</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §2, p. 162.

*homo* consists of these'.<sup>75</sup> Thus, he clarifies, 'there was a union such that from them there was subsisting (*subsistens*) a man of perfect human substance just like any other man.'<sup>76</sup>

Vacarius thus links the position of a separate body and soul to the Christological nihilianist position. Firstly, if body and flesh are separate, how then did Christ the man take up the human accidents or properties, such as talking? Talking is an activity requiring the union of both soul and flesh.<sup>77</sup> Second, Vacarius points out that Christ is 'two substances', although he prefers to state that Christ is 'of' or 'from' two substances, so as not to imply the confusion of the two.<sup>78</sup> Vacarius clarifies that Christ's 'substance' is necessarily different from, and indeed a substrate to, his 'nature'. In doing so, he identifies a crucial error in the dissenters' position: B and his followers erroneously believe that in Christ the body and soul are one nature. In stating that Christ was one nature or nothing, Vacarius suggests, the dissenters are making the same error as Nestorius.<sup>79</sup> Vacarius clarifies the distinction between nature and person for his dissenting interlocutor. By making the mistake of identifying these two, Vacarius warns, the dissenters will fall into the same errors made by Nestorius and Eutyches. Thus for Eutyches, who denied a human person in Christ, the existence of a human nature, or *humanitas*, meant that, in fact, there was no nature; for Nestorius, the presence of *humanitas* meant two persons.<sup>80</sup> Thus, the error of separating body and soul leads to misunderstanding substance, nature, and person in the assumed manhood in the Word.

Vacarius's emphasis is quite different from the Lombard, who focuses on the nature of the union from the perspective of the divinity. Vacarius, and for that matter, Bandinus, was not interested, as the Lombard was, in a systematic explanation of the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures in the Word, so much as an understanding of the composition of humanity (soul and flesh) in the second person of the Word. The argumentation of Vacarius reflects Bandinus's position that Christ as man is not *aliquid* because the soul and body assumed were not united.

<sup>75</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §3, p. 162.

<sup>76</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §5, p. 163.

<sup>77</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §11, p. 163.

<sup>78</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §25, p. 169.

<sup>79</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §34, pp. 172–73.

<sup>80</sup> Vacarius, *Tractatus*, §35, p. 173.

### *Some Observations on Christology in the Anglo-Norman Realm*

The above comparisons indicate that there is more than a passing resemblance between the Christological positions abbreviated, and in some cases exaggerated, by Bandinus from the Lombard, and the less-technically accomplished Vacarian treatise on the 'assumed man'. The works of Bandinus and Vacarius are both polemical in opposite ways; for Bandinus, Christ as man is not *aliquid*, while Vacarius states the opposite position. It is Vacarius's focus on the non-united nature of the *assumptus homo* as this pertains to Christological nihilianism, rather than his discussion of the relative merits of any of the three hypotheses, which marks out Bandinus as the possible target of the *Tractatus de assumpto homine*. The absurdity of adopting such a position is what makes Vacarius take up his pen.

Further, there is some evidence to suggest that there may have been a personal connection between the two. We have no idea of Bandinus's age, but if, as is likely, he was a student at the time that the Lombard's *Sentences* were first taught in Paris in 1157–58, then he would have been roughly in his thirties at this time. Vacarius would have been of a similar age. In any event, they were both products of the schools, as their epithet of 'Master' indicates. Vacarius is known to have travelled several times to Continental Europe during his lifetime, and on these occasions may have made direct contact with Bandinus. Vacarius travelled to France in 1148–49, on behalf of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, where he attended the Council of Reims. Over a decade later, he was in Paris as a messenger for Archbishop Roger of York in 1164, a year after the celebrated conciliar debate at Tours.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps Vacarius attended that council too, since Roger of York was there.<sup>82</sup> Then, in 1171, he again travelled to France to act as compurgator for Roger in Normandy in the aftermath of the Becket martyrdom in 1170.<sup>83</sup> As papal judge delegate on seven occasions between 1176 and 1180, he travelled on more than one occasion to France and Italy.<sup>84</sup> This last circumstance is significant, as his

<sup>81</sup> *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. by J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard, *Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores*, 67, 7 vols (London: Longman, 1875–85), v (1881), 117.

<sup>82</sup> Robert Somerville, *Pope Alexander III and the Council of Tours (1163): A Study of Ecclesiastical Politics and Institutions in the Twelfth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), p. 14.

<sup>83</sup> *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, vii (1885), 500.

<sup>84</sup> Richard W. Southern, 'Master Vacarius and the Beginning of an English Academic Tradition', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to R. W. Hunt*, ed. by

appointer was none other than Pope Alexander III, who had prime responsibility for heading off the danger of Christological nihilianism in the 1170s. In light of these circumstances, Vacarius's reference to the anonymous 'B' in the opening lines of his treatise, and the 'conversations' that took place between them, must surely be a reference to Master Bandinus.

If my contention that 'B' signifies Bandinus is correct, there is no basis for the observation that Vacarius was unaware of current debates in theology. Even if it is the case that the mysterious 'B' is not Bandinus, it is clear from this study that he was a master of some reputation and that he expressed heterodox views on the humanity in Christ. Vacarius's references to 'conversations' with 'B' indicate that he did not compose his treatise in a climate of academic isolation, but one of lively interchange and doctrinal disputation. Moreover, to charge, as Nikolaus M. Häring does, that Vacarius simply mimicked Hugh of St Victor's Christological thought, is unjustified. Vacarius's approach is distinct from Hugh's in many ways. His argument on the Christological nihilianist point, for one, was an issue that had not been dealt with directly by Hugh in his pioneering of the *assumptus homo* position. Further, the *Tractatus de assumpto homine* had recourse to the Boethian-Aristotelian *logica vetus*, most notably for Aristotle's theory of forms, which concepts were not utilized in the hands of Hugh, or for that matter, Gerhoch of Reichersberg, or the other more mystically inclined Victorines. Theirs was a more obviously polemical style, while Vacarius demonstrated a reasoned and balanced approach, no doubt a testament to his legal training. In short, Vacarius wrote his treatise for an audience that needed answers on these doctrinal matters.

This reading of Vacarius and Bandinus against the Master of the Sentences, in addition, provides insight into the scholarly engagement in debates on doctrine and orthodoxy that took place outside the Parisian milieu. This is revealing information about the Christological debates in the 1160s and 1170s in England in particular. Such matters of theological moment, it seems, were debated in centres where Vacarius lived and worked — in York, Canterbury, or possibly Oxford — just as they were in Paris. This should not surprise us, given the prominent roles played by Anglo-Norman thinkers in these debates, namely John of Cornwall, Robert of Cricklade, and John of Salisbury. But whereas the involvement of these men was expected, in light of their strong links to the Parisian schools, that of Vacarius is more unexpected and complex. Vacarius was a schoolman, albeit of a different hue from the usual Parisian master. He was

a practical man, a cross-disciplinary man of great learning; he was most of all concerned with matters in a pragmatic and pastoral context. Explaining to parishioners the outlines of the hypostatic union was important, as was the countering of rumours that the new schools were advocating Christological nihilianism. There was a need felt by Vacarius to deal with the issue in a reasonably systematic, logical, non-hysterical, way, as compared to the writings of Walter of St Victor's *Quattuor labyrinthos* or Gerhoch's treatises on the 'errors of his day'.

The scholarly exchange between Vacarius and Bandinus that this paper suggests brings a new focus on the cluster of teachers who were the Lombard's followers. Certainly, Bandinus 'radicalized' Peter's thoughts on Christology, in contrast to the more considered and cautious works of Stephen Langton and Peter Cantor. This indicates a greater heterogeneity between those figures to whom the attribution has been given, rightly or wrongly, as 'followers' of the Lombard and, consequently, the *habitus* position. Although an unlikely triumvirate, Vacarius, Bandinus, and the Lombard, when seen in relief against each other, cast unexpected light on the reception, dissemination, and audience of one another's ideas on the composition of Christ's human nature.

## FAKE FATHERS: PSEUDONYMOUS SOURCES AND FORGERIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR CANONICAL TEACHING ON WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Gary Macy

**T**he vast collection of laws compiled in the twelfth century by the monk Gratian under the name of the *Concordia discordantium canonicum* but better known simply as the *Decretum* has had a tremendous effect on the history of Christianity. Forming one of the two volumes of the *Corpus iuris canonici*, the official text of church law, its influence lasted, at least among Roman Catholics, until a new body of church law replaced the *Corpus* in 1917.<sup>1</sup> The *Decretum*, even more than most medieval texts, relied on the authorities of the authors it cited. In fact, each law in the *Decretum* has only the force of the law cited since the *Decretum* itself is merely a private collection. Gratian, and later compilers, were careful to name their sources, whether popes, councils, or the great teachers of the early church. Because of this, the *Decretum* became a gold mine of sources for twelfth- and particularly thirteenth-century theologians, as well as, of course, for canonists,<sup>2</sup> becoming, in effect, one of the most

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the formation and influence of Gratian's work, see Anders Winroth, *The Making of Gratian's Decretum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) (hereafter cited as Winroth). According to Winroth, Gratian was responsible for an early version of the collection. The collection as it now exists contains additions added soon afterwards. The status of each of the laws cited here are indicated in the notes.

<sup>2</sup> On the influence of the *Decretum* on later canonists, see Ida Raming, *Priesteramt der Frau: Geschenk Gottes für eine erneuerte Kirche; Erweiterte Neuauflage von 'Der Ausschluss der Frau vom priesterlichen Amt' (1973) mit ausführlicher Bibliographie (1974–2001)* (Münster: LIT, 2002); translated in *A History of Women and Ordination*, II: *The Priestly Office of Women: God's Gift to a Renewed Church*, ed. and trans. by Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy (Lanham,

important means of transmission of the authoritative teaching of the early church.

Sometimes, however, that teaching was not authoritative. Gratian copied what he thought was the teaching of the popes, councils, and great writers of the early church, but which, in fact, was not. He was, rather, copying forgeries or works mistakenly identified as belonging to an authoritative corpus. In one or the other case, this may not have mattered. The forgery or pseudonymous work was simply one of many sources used to settle the issue at hand. Even if one dismissed the spurious authority, others sufficed to make the argument.

In one particular instance, alas, this was not the case. Many, if not most, of the sources used by the *Decretum* to prove that women could not serve at the altar, and indeed to prove that they were inferior to men, were either forgeries or the works of the unknown fourth-century writer now known as the Ambrosiaster, but attributed in the Middle Ages to either Ambrose or Augustine. The subordinate position of women assumed by canon law and by many of the high scholastic theologians rested then on the flimsiest of foundations. Augustine and Ambrose had not argued that women were inferior to men, but medieval authors thought they had.<sup>3</sup> The popes of antiquity had not held that women could not approach the altar, but the *Decretum* said they did.<sup>4</sup> It would be far too simplistic to suggest

MD: Scarecrow, and Oxford: Oxford Publicity Partnership, 2004), chaps 2–4. For the influence of the *Decretum* on later theologians see Kari Børresen, 'Imago Dei, Privilège masculin? Interprétation augustinienne et pseudo-Augustinienne de Gen. 1, 27 and 1 Cor 11, 7', *Augustinianum*, 25 (1985), 213–34, and 'God's Image, Is Woman Excluded? Medieval Interpretation of Gen. 1, 27 and 1 Cor. 11, 7', in *Image of God and Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition*, ed. by Børresen (Oslo: Solum, 1991), pp. 208–27; John Hilary Martin, 'The Ordination of Women and the Theologians in the Middle Ages', *Escritos del Vedat*, 16 (1986), 115–77, and 'The Ordination of Women And the Theologians in the Middle Ages (II)', *Escritos del Vedat*, 18 (1988), 87–143; English translations of both articles appear in *A History Of Women and Ordination*, 1: *The Ordination of Women in Medieval Context*, ed. and trans. by Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2002), pp. 31–160. This article is indebted to, and depends upon, the research of these scholars.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the true position of Augustine and other early church writers on the status of women, see Børresen, 'Imago Dei', pp. 213–34; Børresen, 'God's Image, Man's Image? Patristic Interpretation of Gen. 1, 27 and 1 Cor. 11, 7', in *Image of God*, pp. 188–207, and Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman*, 2 vols (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997–2002), I, 218–36.

<sup>4</sup> Haye van de Meer, *Women Priests in the Catholic Church: A Theological-Historical Investigation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), pp. 91–96, argues that the early ninth-century Bishop Haito of Basel may have been the first to take a strong stand against women ministering at the altar in the *Capitula ecclesiastica*, c. 16, in *Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. by Alfred Boretius, MGH, Leges, 1 (1883), p. 364.

that the centuries-long subordination of women rested on simple scribal slips; nevertheless, it is worth reviewing this tragic and disastrous example of mistransmission of classic ecclesiastical sources.

A series of the sources are quoted in the *Decretum* to prove that women could not serve at the altar. *Distinctio* 23, c. 25, forbids consecrated women or nuns (*monachas*) to touch the sacred vessels or vestments or to incense around the altar.<sup>5</sup> The source given for this prohibition is a letter of the second-century Pope Soter.<sup>6</sup> In reality, the law is a forgery contained in the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales*, a ninth-century collection of ecclesiastical laws.<sup>7</sup> The forgery, though, is not without some historical basis. A somewhat similar prohibition does exist in the *Life of Pope Soter* contained in the first edition of *Liber pontificalis* written in the sixth century.<sup>8</sup> This prohibition, however, forbids any monk (*monachus*) rather than any nun (*monacha*) from touching the sacred altar clothes or incensing the altar.<sup>9</sup> It appears likely that the intention was to separate the monks from clerics — a fairly typical differentiation in the early church.<sup>10</sup> Under the entry for Boniface I (418–22) the same law reappears, but with *monachus* has

<sup>5</sup> 'Vestimenta altaris et uasa sacra mulieres tangere prohibeantur. Sacratas Deo feminas uel monachas sacra uasa uel sacratas pallas penes uos contingere, et incensum circa altaria deferre, perlatum est ad apostolicam sedem: que omnia uituperatione et reprehensione plena esse, nulli recte sapientum dubium est. Quapropter huius sanctae sedis auctoritate hec omnia uobis resecare funditus, quanto citius poteritis, censemus. Et ne pestis hec latius diuulgetur, per omnes prouincias abstergi citissime mandamus': *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. by Emil Friedberg, 2 vols (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1959), I, 86. According to Winroth, p. 199, this was an addition to Gratian's original edition.

<sup>6</sup> 'Gratianus. Vasa sacra et uestimenta altaris mulieres Deo dedicatae contingere, et incensum circa altaria deferre prohibentur. Unde Sother Papa Episcopis Italiae', *dictum: Corpus*, I, 86. Cf. Winroth, p. 199.

<sup>7</sup> 'Sacratas deo feminas vel monachas sacra uasa uel sacratas pallas penes uos contingere et incensum circa altaria deferre perlatum est ad apostolicam sedem, quae omnia reprehensione et vituperatione plena esse nulli recte sapientum dubium est. Quapropter huius sanctae sedis auctoritate haec omnia vobis resecare funditus, quantotius poteritis, censemus, et ne pestis hoc latius diuulgetur, per omnes prouincias, abstergi citissime mandamus': *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, ed. by Paul Hinschius (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1863; repr. Aalen: Scientia, 1963), p. 124.

<sup>8</sup> On the dating of the first edition of the *Liber pontificalis*, see *Le Liber pontificalis*, ed. by Louis Duchesne, 2 vols (Paris: Thorin, 1886), I, pp. xxii–xlvi, and *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd edn, 15 vols (Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2003), VIII, 535.

<sup>9</sup> 'Hic constituit ut nullus monachus palla sacra contingeret nec incensum poneret intra sancta ecclesia': *Liber pontificalis*, I, 59.

<sup>10</sup> See the comments of Duchesne, *Liber pontificalis*, I, 135 n. 3.

been changed to *monacha* with *nulla mulier* added for emphasis. The law excludes washing as well as touching the altar clothes.<sup>11</sup> A much more careful study of the relationship of these two laws would be necessary to determine their relationship, but it is quite possible that the later law was based either on a scribal error or a reinterpretation of the earlier law. The law in the *Decretum*, then, was a ninth-century forgery based on what may have been a fifth-century misunderstanding of an earlier decree.<sup>12</sup>

The same *distinctio* (c. 29) declares that no women, however learned or holy, should presume to teach men in public, nor should laity teach in the presence of clerics.<sup>13</sup> The stern authority quoted here is the Fourth Council of Carthage. In fact, no such council ever took place. Rather, the passage was confabulated from two separate laws contained in the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales*.<sup>14</sup> At a distance, of course, one can hear the admonition of I Timothy 2. 12, 'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent.' The source for the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales* was more recent; however, these laws were included in the *Statuta antiqua*,<sup>15</sup> a collection of laws compiled by Gennadius, the fifth-century bishop of Marseille. Nevertheless Gennadius did not seem to intend to exclude women completely from ecclesial service since he also included a law authorizing widows and other consecrated women to instruct women in preparation for their baptism.<sup>16</sup> Once again the *Decretum* was misled by a misuse of a phony authority. The law is repeated in c. 20 of *distinctio* 4 in the third section of

<sup>11</sup> 'Hic constituit ut nulla mulier vel moncha palla sacrata contingit vel lavarit, aut incesum ponerit in ecclesia, nisi minister; nec servum clericum fieri nec obnoxium curie vel cuiuslibet rei': *Liber pontificalis*, I, 89.

<sup>12</sup> See Raming, *Priestly Office of Women*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> 'Mulieri in conuentu uiros docere non permittitur. Item ex Concilio Cartaginensi IV. Mulier, quamuis docta et sancta, uiros in conuentu docere non presumat. Laicus autem presentibus clericis (nisi ipsis rogantibus) docere non audeat': *Corpus*, I, 86. According to Winroth (p. 199), this was an addition to Gratian's original edition.

<sup>14</sup> 'Laicus praesentibus clericis nisi ipsis rogantibus docere non audeat. Mulier, quamuis docta et sancta, uiros in conuentu docere non presumat': *Concilium Carthaginense quartum*, in *Decretales*, ed. Hinschius (see n. 7, above), cc. 98–99, p. 306.

<sup>15</sup> 'Mulier, quamvis docta et sancta, viros in conuentu docere non audeat': *Concilia Galliae*, ed. by Charles Munier, CCSL, 148 (1963), c. 27, p. 172.

<sup>16</sup> 'Viduae uel sanctimoniales, quae ad ministerium baptizandarum mulierum eliguntur, tam instructae sint ad id officium, ut possint aperto et sano sermone docere imperitas et rusticanas mulieres, tempore quo baptizandae sunt, qualiter baptizatoris ad interrogata respondeant et qualiter accepto baptismo uiuant': *Concilia Galliae*, p. 184.

the *Decretum*, the *De consecratione*, adding that women cannot baptize. This time the law is attributed to the spurious Fifth Council of Carthage.<sup>17</sup> In this case, the *Decretum* hastened to add there could be exceptions in the case of necessity. The actual source here is the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales*,<sup>18</sup> dependent again on the *Statuta*.<sup>19</sup>

*De consecratione, distinctio* 1, *capitula* 41 and 42, at least imply that women should not approach the sacred altar. *Capitulum* 41 is attributed to Pope Sixtus and declares that the sacred vessels are to be handled only *sacris hominibus*.<sup>20</sup> *Capitulum* 42, supposedly from Pope Stephen, gives the same prohibition, but only for vestments.<sup>21</sup> The Latin words used in both laws, *sacris homines*, here, however, can mean either ‘consecrated people’ or ‘consecrated males’. Later interpreters of these laws clearly understood them to refer to males, and this may have been the original intent,<sup>22</sup> but, it turns out, neither Pope Sixtus nor Pope Stephen ever wrote these letters. Both laws, as those discussed above, are forgeries from the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> ‘Non presumat mulier baptizare. Item ex Concilio Cartaginensi V. III. Pars. Mulier, quamvis docta et sancta, baptizare aliquos uel uiros docere in conuentu, non presumat. Gratian. Nisi necessitate cogente’: *Corpus*, I, 1367. According to Winroth, *De consecratione* in its entirety was an addition to the original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Mulier baptizare non praesumat’: *Concilium Carthaginense quartum*, c. 100, p. 306.

<sup>19</sup> See n. 13, above, and ‘Mulier baptizare non praesumat’: *Concilia Galliae*, c. 41, p. 173.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Sacra uasa non nisi a sacris contrectentur hominibus. Item Sixtus. In sancta apostolica sede statutum est, ut sacra uasa non ab aliis, quam a sacris Dominoque dicatis contrectentur hominibus. Ne pro talibus presumptionibus iratus Dominus plagam inponat populo suo, et hi etiam, qui non peccauerunt, pereant quia perit iustus sepius pro impio’: *Corpus*, I, 1304–05.

<sup>21</sup> ‘Non nisi a sacris hominibus uestimenta sacra ferentur. Item Stephanus Episcopus familiaris amico Hilario. Vestimenta ecclesiae quibus Domino ministratur, et sacra debent esse et honesta, quibus in aliis usibus non debent frui, quam ecclesiasticis et Deo dignis offitiis; que nec ab aliis debent contingi aut offerri, nisi a sacris hominibus, ne ultio, que Baltasar regem percussit, super hoc transgredientes ueniat, et corruiere eos faciat ad ima’: *Corpus*, I, 1305.

<sup>22</sup> Raming, *Priestly Office*, pp. 8–9. The text for c. 41 as contained in the *Decretales* clearly refers to men. See n. 23, below.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Cognoscat vestra sapientia, karissimi fratres, quia in hec sancta apostolica sede a nobis et reliquis episcopis ceterisque domini sacerdotibus statutum est, ut sacra uasa non ab aliis quam a sacris dominoque dicatis contrectentur hominibus. Indignum enim valde est ut sacra domini uasa, quaecunque sint, humanis usibus seruiant, aut ab aliis quam a domino famulantibus eique dicatis tractentur uiris, ne pro talibus praesumptionibus iratus dominus plagam imponant populo suo, et hi qui etiam non peccauerunt mala patiantur aut pereant, quia perit iustus sepius pro impio’: *Epistola Sixti papae universis ecclesiis directa*, in *Decretales*, ed. Hinschius (see n. 7, above),

The most influential statement concerning the role of women in ministry came from Gratian himself. In a *dictum* on the question of whether a woman can give testimony against a priest, Gratian answers in the negative. Supported by a letter of Pope Fabian,<sup>24</sup> Gratian argues that only a person holding the same order, or capable of holding such an order, can accuse or testify against a priest. Gratian continues, 'A woman cannot be promoted either to the priesthood or even to the diaconate and for this reason they may not raise a complaint or give testimony against priests in court.' Gratian quickly dismisses the objection that women were judges in the Old Testament by explaining, 'In the old law many things were permitted that today have been abolished by the perfection of grace.' Paraphrasing I Corinthians 11. 7–10, Gratian states that women must be subject to men, a status signified by women covering their heads.<sup>25</sup> The master then adds support

p. 108. 'Vestimenta vero aecclesiastica quibus domino ministratur, et sacrata debent et honesta. Quibus aliis usibus nemo debet frui quam aecclesiasticis in deo dignis officiis. Que nec ab aliis debent contingi aut ferri, nisi a sacratis hominibus, ne ultio que Balthasar percussit super haec transgredientibus et talia presumptibus veniat divina et corruiere eos faciat ad ima': *Epistola decretalis Stephani papae Hilario episcopo directa*, *ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>24</sup> The *Decretum* includes the letter as *causa 2, questio 7, capitulum 6*: 'Nec clerici in accusatione laicorum, nec laici in accusatione clericorum sunt recipiendi. Item Fabianus Episcopus urbis Romae cunctis fidelibus. Sicut sacerdotes uel reliqui clerici a secularium laicorum excluduntur accusatione, ita illi ab istorum sunt excludendi et alienandi criminatione, et sicut illi ab istis, ita et isti ab illis non recipiantur, quoniam sicut Domini sacerdotum segregata debet esse conuersatio ab eorum conuersatione, ita et litigatio, quia seruum Dei non oportet litigare' (*Corpus*, 1, 484). According to Winroth, p. 207, this law was an addition to the original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>25</sup> 'Gratianus. Tertio queritur, an ex mulieris confessione iste sit condemnandus? In quo primum uidendum est, an mulier sacerdotem accusare ualeat? Quod sacris canonibus omnino uidetur esse prohibitum. Generaliter enim statutum est ex decretis Fabiani Papae, ut sacerdotes Domini non accusent, nec in eos testificentur, qui sui ordinis non sunt, nec esse possunt. Mulieres autem non solum ad sacerdotium, sed nec etiam ad diaconatum prouehi possunt, unde nec sacerdotes accusare, nec in eos testificari ualent. Legibus quoque cautum est, ut ob uerecundiam sui sexus mulier apud pretorem pro alio non intercedat, nisi forte suas uel suorum iniurias persequi maluerit. Hec autem, que nec suas, nec suorum iniurias persequitur, ad hanc accusationem admitti non debet. §. 1. Econtra qui iudicis personam gerere ualeat ab accusatoris offitio non remouetur. Mulieres autem in ueteri testamento populum iudicasse, quicumque librum Iudicum legerit ignorare non poterit. Non itaque ab accusatione remoueri possunt quas etiam iudicis personam frequenter gessisse constat, nec ulla serie diuinarum scripturarum ab accusatione prohibentur. §. 2. His ita respondetur: In ueteri lege multa permittebantur, que hodie perfectione gratiae abolita sunt. Cum enim mulieribus permetteretur populum iudicare, hodie pro peccato, quod mulier induxit, ab Apostolo eis indicitur uerecundari, uiro subditas esse, in signum subiectionis uelatum caput habere. Que ergo his omnibus uiro subiecta ostenditur, cui pro alio postulare non conce-

to his argument by quoting Roman law to the effect that women cannot give testimony in certain court cases.<sup>26</sup>

Once again the determining authority, the letter of Pope Fabian, came not from the hand of this or any pontiff, but was forged by the ingenious author of the pseudo-Isidorian *Decretales*.<sup>27</sup> The ruling that priests could not be accused by, or witnessed against, by anyone of lower rank was, in effect, only the opinion of the compilers of the *Decretales*. The pronouncement of Gratian that women could not aspire to the diaconate or priesthood was his own opinion and one that was much disputed in the mid-twelfth century.<sup>28</sup> Yet, combined with the *dictum* of Gratian, it helped to effectively exclude women from the ranks of the clergy.

The opinion of Gratian that the apostle Paul taught the superiority of women over men finds continued repetition in the rest of the *Decretum*. In a discussion of adultery, Gratian attempted to reconcile church teaching with the opinion of Ambrose in his commentary on I Corinthians that a woman whose husband commits adultery must either remain unmarried or be reconciled while a man whose wife commits adultery may remarry.<sup>29</sup> Surely, Gratian suggested, this passage must

ditur, ad accusationem admittenda non uidetur': *Corpus*, I, 750–51. According to Winroth, this passage was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>26</sup> *Decretum*, c. 15, q. 3, cc. 1–3. On the origin of these laws, see Raming, *Priestly Office*, pp. 35–40. According to Winroth, p. 214, these laws were part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>27</sup> 'Quoniam sicut sacerdotes vel reliqui clerici a secularium laicorum excluduntur accusatione, ita illi ab istorum sunt excludendi et alienandi criminatione; et sicut isti ab illis, ita et illi ab istis non recipiuntur, quoniam sicut domini sacerdotum segregata debet esse conversatio ab eorum, ita et litigatio, quia servum dei non oportet litigare': *Fabiani decreta, Epistola cuius supra ad omnes orientales episcopos*, in *Decretales*, ed. Hinschius (see n. 7, above), p. 162.

<sup>28</sup> For a thorough discussion of the twelfth-century dispute over the ordination of women, see Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of the Ordination of Women: Female Clergy in the Medieval West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>29</sup> 'Adulterium secundum in penis obtinet locum. Item ex epistola Clementis. Quid in omnibus peccatis est adulterio grauius? Secundum namque in penis obtinet locum, quem quidem primum illi habent, qui aberrant a Deo, etiamsi sobrie uixerint. Gratian. His auctoritatibus euidentissime monstratur, quod quicumque causa fornicationis uxorem suam dimiserit, illa uiuente aliam ducere non poterit, et, si duxerit, reus adulterii erit. IV. Pars. §. 1. His ita respondetur. He auctoritates de eis locuntur, quorum continentiam carnalis infirmitas non inedit, uel de his, qui, prestantes causam discidii, aliorum coniunctione se reddiderunt indignos. Unde Ambrosius super epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios: "Uxor a uiro non discedat, nisi causa fornicationis; quod si discesserit, aut maneat innupta, aut reconcilietur uiro suo; et uir similiter non dimittat uxorem". Ideo non subdit de uiro quod de uxore premisit, quia uiro licet ducere aliam': *Corpus*, c. 32, q. 7, cc. 16–17 (I, 1144). According to Winroth, p. 224, this section was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

have been inserted into Ambrose's text by falsifiers, or possibly Ambrose was only referring to cases of incest.<sup>30</sup>

Gratian need not have struggled so to reconcile the long-standing teaching of the church on the indissolubility of marriage with the authority of the great church teacher, Ambrose. The commentary on Paul used by Gratian was actually written by an anonymous author now known by scholars as the Ambrosiaster. The quotation on the subject of adultery used by Gratian is a paraphrase of Ambrosiaster's commentary on I Corinthians 7. 11. Here, the author of the commentary makes it clear that women are subject to more restrictions than man, since, as Paul says in I Corinthians 11. 3, 'A man is the head of a woman.'<sup>31</sup>

In *causa 33, questio 5*, Gratian takes up the question of whether a woman who had taken a vow of self-denial for religious reasons (for example, fasting) with the permission of her husband could be forced to revoke that vow if her husband should later change his mind. Gratian decides that the husband could revoke his permission:

And so it is most clearly evident that a man is so much the head of a woman that she is allowed to offer herself to God by no vow of abstinence or by conversion to the religious life without his permission; even if she should bind herself with his permission, it would not be allowed for her to fulfill her vow, if the man should change and revoke his permission.

<sup>30</sup> 'Gratian. Sed illud Ambrosii a falsatoribus dicitur insertum. Illud Gregorii sacris canonibus, imo euangelicae et apostolicae doctrinae penitus inuenitur aduersum. Quidam uero, sententiam Ambrosii seruare cupientes, non de qualibet fornicatione illud arbitrantur intelligi, ut ob quamlibet fornicationem uir licite dimittat uxorem, et uiuente dimissa aliam ducat, sed de incestuosa tantum fornicatione intelligitur, cum uxor uidelicet alicuius, patri et filio, fratri uel auunculo uiri sui, uel alicui similibus se constuprandam publice tradiderit': *Corpus*, I, 1145. According to Winroth, p. 224, this passage was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>31</sup> 'Uxorem a viro non discedere; quodsi discesserit, manere innupta. Hoc apostoli consilium est, ut si discesserit propter malam conversationem viro, iam innupta maneat. Aut viro reconciliari. quodsi continere se, inquit, non potest, quia pugnare non vult contra carnem, viro reconcilietur. non enim permittitur mulieri, ut nubat, si virum suum causa fornicationis dimiserit aut apostasiae aut si [inlicita] inpellente lascivia usum quaeret uxoris, quia inferior non omnino hac lege utitur quae potior. Si tamen apostatet vir aut usum quaerat uxoris invertere, nec alii postest nubere mulier nec reuerit ad illum. Et vir ne uxorem dimittat, virum uxorem non dimittere. Subauditur autem: excepta causa fornicationis. Et ideo non suicit sicut de muliere dicens: quodsi discesserit, manere sic, quia viro licet ducere uxorem, si dimiserit [uxorem] peccantem, quia non ita lege contrahitur vir sicut mulier; caput enim mulieris vir est': *Ambrosiastri qui dicitur Commentarius in epistulas Paulinus*, ed. by Heinrich Vogels, 3 vols, CSEL, 71 (1966–69), II, 74–75. On the identity and dating of the Ambrosiaster and his work, see *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, I, 346–47.

Gratian goes on to offer ten quotations from Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose to prove the superiority of men over women. Seven of the quotations are genuine, but three are not. In *causa* 13, Gratian quotes from the *Questions Concerning the Old and New Testament* attributed to Augustine the opinion that while man is made in the image of God, woman is not.<sup>32</sup> The passage misquotes Paul in I Corinthians to support this view: 'A man ought not to cover his head because he is the image and glory of God; a woman though is covered because she is not the glory of image of God.'<sup>33</sup>

Augustine, however, did not write the *Questions Concerning the Old and New Testament*, nor was this Augustine's opinion on the relationship of men and women.<sup>34</sup> The *Questions* was actually written by the Ambrosiaster, the same pseudonymous author whose commentary of Paul was attributed to Ambrose.<sup>35</sup> The passage quoted by Gratian occurs in Chapter 106, *On the Book of Genesis*, where the Ambrosiaster compares the creation of woman from man as the same as the creation of man from God. A woman is subservient to a man because she comes from him, just as a man is subservient to God because God created man.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> 'Vir est caput mulieris. Idem in Questionibus Veteris et Noui Testamenti. Hec imago Dei est in homine, ut unus factus sit ex quo ceteri oriantur, habens imperium Dei, quasi uicarius eius, quia unius Dei habet imaginem, ideoque mulier non est facta ad Dei imaginem. Sic etenim dicit: "Et fecit Deus hominem; ad imaginem Dei fecit illum". Hinc etiam Apostolus: "Vir quidem", ait, "non debet uelare caput, quia imago et gloria Dei est; mulier ideo uelat, quia non est gloria aut imago Dei": *Corpus*, I, 1254. According to Winroth, p. 226, this passage was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>33</sup> Paul actually wrote 'Vir quidem non debet velare caput quoniam imago et gloria est Dei mulier autem gloria viri est [For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection of God; but woman is the reflection of man]': I Corinthians 11. 7.

<sup>34</sup> See n. 3, above.

<sup>35</sup> See n. 31, above.

<sup>36</sup> 'Quid sit autem 'ad imaginem et similitudinem, quamvis alibi dixerimus, hic tamen locus et causa postulat ut iterum dicamus. Patris enim ad filium uerba sunt dicentis: faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram, quamquam in omni opere utriusque intellegatur persona, dicentis et obaudientis. Haec ergo imago dei est in homine, ut unus factus sit quasi dominus, ex quo ceteri orientur, habens imperium, dei quasi uicarius eius, quia omnis rex dei habet imaginem. Ideoque mulier non est facta ad dei imaginem. Sic etenim dicit: et fecit deus hominem, ad imaginem dei fecit eum. Hinc est unde apostolus: uir quidem ait, non debet uelare caput, quia imago et gloria dei est; mulier autem ideo uelat, quia non est gloria aut imago dei. Similitudo autem dei haec est in homine, ut, sicut ex patre filius, similiter ex homine mulier, in hoc plane dispar, quia haec facta, ille uero natus est': *Pseudo-Augustini Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti CXXVII*, ed. by Alexander Souter, CSEL, 50 (1908), pp. 243–44.

A second quotation from the *Questions* appears in c. 17 of *causa* 33, this time attributed to Ambrose. The teaching clearly outlines the subordinate status of women: '[God] established women to be subject to the rule of men, and to have no authority. She is not able to teach, nor to be a witness, to give testimony, nor to judge.'<sup>37</sup> The selection is part of a longer passage in which the Ambrosiaster establishes that men alone are the dominant form of humanity and that it would be absurd to think of women sharing this authority.<sup>38</sup>

A final quotation attributed to Ambrose, but actually from the Ambrosiaster's commentary on I Corinthians, is recorded in c. 19. Here the subservient status of women is clearly linked to her role in the fall of humankind:

A woman ought to cover her head because she is not an image of God. But as she is shown to be subservient and because the transgression began through her, she ought to have this sign in church out of reverence for the bishop; she should not have her head free, but covered by a veil; she does not have the power of speaking because the bishop holds the person of Christ. Therefore, as though before Christ the judge, she is thus before the bishop because he is the vicar of the Lord; she ought to be seen to be subservient because of original sin.<sup>39</sup>

The passage here is nearly identical to the original commentary by the Ambrosiaster on I Corinthians 11. 8–10. Slight variations in the original identify 'angels'

<sup>37</sup> 'Nulla est mulieris potestas, sed in omnibus uiri dominio subsit. Item Ambrosius in libro questionum Veteris Testamenti. Mulierem constat subiectam dominio uiri esse, et nullam auctoritatem habere; nec docere potest, nec testis esse, neque fidem dare, nec iudicare': *Corpus*, I, 1255. According to Winroth, p. 224, this passage was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

<sup>38</sup> 'Aliquibus tamen uidetur, quia in dominatione imago dei factus est homo, quia dixit: et dominetur piscium maris et uolatilium caeli et totius terrae, cum non solum viro, sed et mulieri ista cernantur subiecta, quam constat deir imaginem non habet. Quod quidem duplici modo caret ratione; per hoc enim neque ad filium dixisse deus adseritur: faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram, sed ad dominationes caelestes, quas apostolus memorat, si imaginem dei homo in dominatione habet, et mulieri datur, ut et ipsa imago dei sit, quod absurdum est, quo modo enim potest de muliere dici, quia imago dei est, quam constat dominio uiri subiectam et nullam auctoritatem habere? Nec docere enim potest nec testis esse neque fidem dicere nec iudicare: quanto magis imperare?': *De imagine*, in *Quaestiones*, ed. Souter (see n. 36, above), c. 45, pp. 82–83.

<sup>39</sup> 'Idem super primam epistolam ad Chorinthios. Mulier debet uelare caput, quia non est imago Dei. Sed ut ostendatur subiecta, et quia preuaricatio per illam inchoata est, hoc signum debet habere, in ecclesia propter reuerentiam episcopalem non habeat caput liberum, sed uelamine tectum, non habeat potestatem loquendi quia episcopus personam habet Christi. Quasi ergo ante iudicem Christum, ita ante episcopum sit, quia uicarius Domini est, propter peccatum originale debet subiecta uideri': *Corpus*, I, 1255–56. According to Winroth, p. 224, this passage was part of Gratian's original edition of the *Decretum*.

mentioned by Paul as the bishops and make even clearer the responsibility of women for original sin.<sup>40</sup>

Not all of the texts cited in the *Decretum* to prove the inferiority of women were spurious, of course. Still, according to the survey of these passages by Ida Raming, a great number of them were; and they were very influential. Particularly influential were the commentaries on the Bible by the Ambrosiaster.<sup>41</sup> As Kari Børresen has shown, the teaching of the Ambrosiaster was particularly strident in its insistence on the subservience of women.<sup>42</sup> The authentic teaching of Augustine espoused a teaching that emphasized the spiritual equality of men and women.<sup>43</sup> As Børresen has demonstrated, this clash of positions, supposedly within the same author, caused some concern to early scriptural commentators.<sup>44</sup>

One particular passage from the Ambrosiaster, namely his commentary on I Timothy, had a powerful influence on twelfth- and thirteenth-century theologians. Ambrosiaster, unlike most early commentators, argued that Paul in fact never intended to speak of any ministry for women in either his Letter to Romans, where Paul mentions the 'deaconess, Phoebe', or in the First Letter to Timothy, where Paul outlines the requirements for office in the church, including that of deaconesses.<sup>45</sup> John Hilary Martin summarizes Ambrosiaster's position succinctly:

<sup>40</sup> 'Potestatem velamen significavit; angelos episcopos dicit, sicut docetur in Apocalypsi Iohannis. Et quia utique homines sunt, quod non corripere plebem arguuntur, et quod rectum in illis est laudatur. Mulier ergo idcirco debet velare caput, quia non est imago dei, sed ut ostendatur subiecta. Et quia praevaricatio per illam inchoata est, hoc signum debet habere, ut in ecclesia propter reverentiam sacerdotalem (episcopalem) non habeat caput liberum, sed velamine tectum, nec potestatem loquendi, quia sacerdos (episcopus) personam habet Christi. Quasi ergo ante iudicem sic ante sacerdotum (episcopum), quia vicarius domini est, propter reatus originem subiecta debet videri': *Ambrosiastri qui dicitur Commentarius*, III, 122–23.

<sup>41</sup> Raming, *Priestly Office*, pp. 24–34.

<sup>42</sup> Børresen, 'Imago Dei', pp. 215–18, and 'God's Image, Man's Image', pp. 192–94.

<sup>43</sup> Børresen, 'Imago Dei', pp. 219–23, and 'God's Image, Man's Image', pp. 199–205.

<sup>44</sup> Børresen, 'Imago Dei', pp. 223–32, and 'God's Image, Is Woman Excluded', pp. 209–14.

<sup>45</sup> Romans 16. 1–2: 'I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.' I Timothy 4. 8–13: 'Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money; they must hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them first be tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them serve as deacons. Women likewise must be serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be married only once, and let them manage their children and their households well; for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.'

Paul does not intend to say [in I Timothy] that 'women likewise are *deacons*', Ambrosiaster insists, but rather that they likewise should be *respectable*. What Paul wants is that the people should be holy just as the clergy are (the bishops and the deacons) and that this level of holiness should even be found among women who might seem to be of little importance. Seizing on the words of Paul, he continues, the Cataphrygians (a sect of the second century Montanist heresy) tried to twist these words out of context to imply that Paul talked about the deaconesses as well as the deacons at the church. For Ambrosiaster, it is clear that Paul should not be interpreted in this way since he had already commanded women 'to keep silence in the church' in the previous passage. Besides, the Cataphrygians were tendentious in proposing their view since they knew very well that the Apostles had chosen seven male deacons even though there were holy women in their company.<sup>46</sup>

The first of the medieval commentaries to use Ambrosiaster in this manner was that attributed to Bruno the Carthusian dating from the early twelfth century. The commentator insists that Paul was not speaking of a separate order of deaconesses in I Timothy, but was rather, inserting a section on the wives of deacons in the middle of a discussion of deacons.<sup>47</sup> With a bow to an older tradition, however, he adds that perhaps deaconesses are intended here, but the term *deaconess* refers to nuns.<sup>48</sup>

A much more influential commentary on Paul was produced at the School of Laon in the early twelfth century, quite possibly by the two great masters of that School, Anselm and Ralph of Laon.<sup>49</sup> This commentary was known as the

<sup>46</sup> John Hilary Martin, 'The Ordination Of Women', pp. 133–34 (trans. by Cooke and Macy, *History of Women*, I, 45). Cf. Ambrosiaster: 'sanci estote, quia et ego sanctus sum, ideoque etiam mulieres, quae inferiores videntur, sine crimine vult esse, ut munda sit ecclesia Dei. Sed Catafrygae occasionem errores captantes propter quod post diaconos mulieres adloquitur, etiam ipsas diaconissas [diaconas] debere ordinari vana presumptione defendunt, cum sciant apostolos septem diaconos elegerisse. Numquid nulla mulier tunc idonea inventa est, cum inter undecim apostolos sanctas mulieres fuisse legimus?': *Ambrosiastri qui dicitur Commentarius*, III, 268.

<sup>47</sup> 'Hic inserit praeceptum de mulieribus ante et post agens de diaconibus, quod intersertum nisi ad diaconos aliquomodo pertineat, inconueniens hic ordo videtur. Ut autem quod ait de mulieribus conuenienter insertum iudicetur, sic exponimus: *Mulieres* quae nuptae fuerint his qui in diaconatum promouentur, *similiter* oportet esse *pudicas*, id est necesse est profiteri castitatem, sicut viros earum': *Expositio in epistolas Pauli, Epistola I ad Timotheum*, in PL, CLIII, c. 3, col. 442C. On the pseudo-Bruno gloss, see Gary Macy, 'Some Examples of the Influence of Exegesis on the Theology of the Eucharist in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 52 (1985), 64–77.

<sup>48</sup> 'Vel si placet mulieres diaconissae, scilicet moniales, similiter oporteat esse pudicas, etc., sicut dicta sunt': *Expositio in epistolas Pauli*, col. 442D.

<sup>49</sup> 'The known facts concerning the authorship of the *Gloss* are as follows. The central figure is Anselm of Laon.[...] Anselm was certainly responsible for the *Gloss* on St. Paul and the Psalter,

*Glossa ordinaria* (usual commentary) on Scripture since it was so frequently used throughout the Middle Ages. The *Glossa ordinaria* on the Letters of Paul even more clearly ruled out the possibility of a female ministry. First the *Glossa* notes the usual reservation, 'Now he [Paul] says that the office of teaching is suitable for only males alone.'<sup>50</sup> One early exemplar of the *Glossa* continues, however, 'because he does not say that women ought to be ordained into the offices of the church, but he says that the wives of those ordained, that is of deacons and priests, [ought] to be chaste'.<sup>51</sup> Following Ambrosiaster, some versions of the *Glossa* denied that I Timothy gave any reference to deaconesses asserting that only the Cataphrygian heretics would so read the text.<sup>52</sup>

In effect, the commentary on Paul in the *Glossa* would exclude women from the possibility of ordination to the diaconate. The teachings from the School at Laon were widely copied, and according to Marcia Colish, 'The School of Laon plays a critical role in the development of the sacramental understanding of the priesthood in the twelfth century.'<sup>53</sup> In the early decades of the twelfth century a theology was developing that would completely remove women from any ordained ministry. The teaching of the Ambrosiaster, especially as related by the School of Laon, further argued that Scripture contains no references to women deaconesses and only heretics in fact allowed them.

This teaching took its most abrupt and dogmatic expression, as mentioned above, in Gratian's *Decretum*, in *causa* 15, *questio* 3: 'Women are not able to advance

probably for that on the Fourth Gospel': Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p. 60.

<sup>50</sup> 'Nunc dicit quod docendi officium solis viris conveniat et quales ad illud debeant ordinari determinat': *Biblia Latina cum Glossa Ordinaria: Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81*, 4 vols (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), IV, 407. Mark Zier kindly checked this passage against the microfilm of six early manuscripts from Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF). All were probably written before 1200. All six contain the passage in question. The references are: MS lat. 310, fol. 97<sup>r</sup>; MS lat. 312, fol. 145<sup>r</sup>; MS lat. 313, fol. 143<sup>r</sup>; MS lat. 314, fol. 124<sup>r</sup>; MS lat. 654, fol. 158<sup>r</sup>; MS lat. 14785, fol. 97<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> 'Quia non dicit mulieres debere hordinari in officiis ecclesiasticis, sed dicit mulieres ordinatorum, idest diaconorum et sacerdotum esse pudicas non dicit sobrias, etc': BnF, MS lat. 654, fol. 158<sup>r</sup>. Again, I wish to thank Mark Zier for this citation.

<sup>52</sup> 'Mulieres similiter Ambro. Cum sanctum precipit creari episcopum et diaconum plebem non disparare vult esse etiam infimo gradu mulierum ut munda sit ecclesia sed occasione horum verborum cathaphrige dicunt diaconas debere ordinari quod est contra auctoritatem': *Biblia Latina*, IV, 408, col. 2 (a passage not found in the above-cited sources).

<sup>53</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, ed. by A. J. Vanderjagt, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 41, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994), II, 618.

to the priesthood or even to the diaconate, therefore they are capable of neither accusing priests nor of testifying against them.<sup>54</sup> Here was a clear and unambiguous statement that women could not be ordained either as priests or deacons. Ida Raming has even suggested that this passage in the *Decretum* was influenced by the commentary of the Ambrosiaster on I Timothy.<sup>55</sup>

Many factors were involved in the gradual exclusion of and growing subservience of women within religious life in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but at least one factor was simple error. The transmission of inauthentic tradition through forgery and misidentification is as much a part of the story of the appropriation (and misappropriation) of classical sources as is the transmission of the authentic tradition. One of the most disastrous instances of this mistransmission was that of the teaching about women carried by the *Decretum*.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> See note 25, above.

<sup>55</sup> Raming, *Priestly Office*, p. 24.

<sup>56</sup> For a fascinating analysis of the effect of the medieval teaching about women on contemporary American culture, see Margaret Miles, 'Violence against Women in the Historical Christian West and in North American Secular Culture: The Visual and Textual Evidence', in *Shaping New Vision: Gender and Values in American Culture*, ed. by Clarissa Atkinson, Constance Buchanan, and Margaret Miles, *Studies in Religion*, 5 (Ann Arbor: UMI Research, 1987), pp. 11–29.

## THE LADY VANISHES: GERVASE OF TILBURY ON HERESY AND WONDERS

Edward M. Peters

**T**he *Otia imperialia* of Gervase of Tilbury, dedicated to Emperor Otto IV and often studied or dismissed as an interesting farrago of wonders and high-end folklore, is also a shrewd instructional manual concerning those things essential for an emperor and his court to know. More often than not, Gervase's wonders turn out to be just as instructional as his explicit accounts of biblical history and practical geography. One kind of wonder, ladies who vanish, addresses in particular some common worries of thirteenth-century churchmen and laymen concerning the conduct — or misconduct — of the laity.

Gervase was one of those twelfth-century English scholars and administrators who made temporary or permanent careers on the Continent, collectively studied by Richard Southern and in the case of Gervase himself by H. G. Richardson.<sup>1</sup> In

Earlier versions of this essay were given at the New College Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Studies in 2004, at the Columbia University Medieval Seminar in 2005, and to the Delaware Valley Medieval Association in 2007. I am grateful to Lee Daniel Snyder, Joel Kaye, and Elaine Beretz for their hospitality, to Mark Pegg, Ann Matter, Rita Copeland, and Robert Maxwell for readings of early drafts, and to Raymond J. Cormier and Armin Wolf for bibliographical assistance.

<sup>1</sup> H. G. Richardson, 'Gervase of Tilbury', *History*, n.s., 46 (1961), 102–14 (repr. in *Change in Medieval Society: Europe North of the Alps, 1050–1500*, ed. by Sylvia Thrupp (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964; repr. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), pp. 89–102). Richardson's article was the work of a wide-ranging and original constitutional historian who also did original research on medieval English Jewry. He cites as an example of contemporary interest in Englishmen on the Continent the article by Richard Southern, 'The Place of England in the

1961 Richardson summed up the extant scholarship to date on the life and works of Gervase, provided a brief *précis* of Gervase's vast and great work, the *Otia imperialia*, and concluded by observing that:

It is regrettable too that, apart from Pauli's extracts, published three-quarters of a century ago, there should be no critical edition of Gervase's writings. It would be fitting if an English scholar were to make the *Otia Imperialia* easily accessible to historians.<sup>2</sup>

It took forty years, and a great deal of scholarship in English and other languages, especially the basic manuscript studies of J. R. Caldwell, but in 2002 two English scholars, S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns, indeed produced an excellent annotated edition and translation of Gervase's extant writings.<sup>3</sup>

Twelfth-Century Renaissance', which had appeared in *History* a year earlier and was reprinted in Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), pp. 158–80.

<sup>2</sup> Richardson, 'Gervase of Tilbury', p. 114. The reference is to Reinhold Pauli, 'E Gervasii Tilleberiensis Otiis imperialibus', MGH, *Scriptores*, 27 (1885), pp. 312–32, a series of extracts from the *Otia* based on Pauli's earlier work: 'Gervasius von Tilbury', *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und der Georg-August-Universität zu Göttingen* (1882), 312–32. Except for F. Liebrecht's edition of some of the marvels in *Otia* III (*Die Gervasius von Tilbury Otia Imperialia in einer Auswahl neu herausgegeben und mit Anmerkungen begleitet* (Hannover: Rümpler, 1856)), Pauli's was the first edition of any kind since the extensive, but defective edition of G. W. Leibniz in 1707–10. Selections concerning English geography and history were edited from a better Vatican MS and printed by Joseph Stevenson in his edition of *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum*, Rolls Series, 66 (London: Longman, 1875), pp. 419–49. Stevenson's Vatican MS is O in the stemma of Banks and Binns (see n. 3, below).

<sup>3</sup> Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, ed. and trans. by Shelagh E. Banks and James W. Binns, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002). Hereafter cited as *Otia*, followed by part and section number. Extant bibliography is summed up in the new edition. The editors also include the recently discovered *Commentary on the Lord's Prayer* by Gervase. Their preface indicates the extraordinary range of scholarship in many languages and electronic databases that the project required and acknowledges the assistance of many other scholars. The only other modern edition is the learned French translation of Book III by Annie Duchesne, *Gervais de Tilbury: Le Livre des Merveilles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1992). Banks and Binns also print additional material found in later manuscripts, *Otia*, pp. 828–901. More recently, Annie Duchesne, 'Miracles et merveilles chez Gervais de Tilbury', in *Miracles, prodiges et merveilles au moyen âge*, Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public, Histoire ancienne et médiévale, 34 (Paris: Sorbonne, 1995), pp. 151–58, and, with more extensive bibliography, Michael Rothmann, 'Mirabilia vero dicimus, quae nostrae cognitioni non subiacent, etiam cum sint naturalia: Wundergeschichten zwischen Wissen und Unterhaltung: der "Liber de mirabilibus mundi" ("Otia Imperialia") des Gervasius von Tilbury', in *Mirakel im Mittelalter: Konzeptionen Erscheinungsformen Deutungen*, ed. by Martin Heinzelmann, Klaus Herbers, and Dieter R. Bauer (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002), pp. 399–432, and for vernacular translations, Dominique

In Gervase's own case, the career was a very impressive and productive one, although the chronology of the life is not always clear. Born in the late 1150s or early 1160s into an Essex family with connections to the upper nobility, Gervase was schooled in England and Angevin *Francia*, possibly but not certainly in Paris. He had close associations with the family of Patrick, Earl of Salisbury (*Otia*, III.12), and was a friend of Henry (III) the Young King (†1183), for whom he once began to prepare a *Liber facetiarum*, most likely a book of suitable courtly advice in the manner of the popular Latin mid-twelfth-century poem *Facetus*, rather than the collections of scatological anecdotes that the genre later became.<sup>4</sup> He was present (although we do not know in what capacity, if any) at the agreement between Frederick Barbarossa and Alexander III that produced the Treaty of Venice in 1177, was a clerk in the household of Archbishop William of Reims (1176–1202) in the late 1170s or early 1180s, studied and then taught canon law at Bologna sometime later in the 1180s, and served in the household of William II of Sicily (†1189), where he may have acquired some of his geographical perspectives from the local Arabic-Norman literary tradition. Around 1200 he was attached to the household of Imbert d'Aigüières, Archbishop of Arles (1191–1202), visited Rome for the coronation of Otto IV in 1209, and was appointed Marshall of the kingdom of Arles by Otto IV around 1210, more, probably, for his learning and legal skills than for any military capacity. He dedicated the *Otia imperialia* to Otto, probably in 1215, a year after the defeat at Bouvines, when the unhappy former emperor had perforce rather more *otium* than usual. Although

Gerner and Cinzia Pignatelli, *Traductions françaises des 'Otia imperialia', de Gervais de Tilbury par Jean d'Antioche et Jean de Vignay: Édition de la troisième partie*, Publications romanes et françaises, 237 (Geneva: Droz, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> As in the collection by Poggio Bracciolini of the same title of 1451. On the courtly origins of the genre, see John Gillingham, 'From *Civilitas* to Civility: Codes of Manners in Medieval and Early Modern England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, ser. 6, 12 (2002), 267–89, with extensive bibliography. On Poggio's collection, see Joseph S. Salemi's 'Selections from the *Facetiae* of Poggio Bracciolini', *Allegorica*, 8 (1983), 77–183, and 'Further Selections from Poggio Bracciolini's *Facetiae*', *Allegorica*, 11 (1990), 38–58. On the genre and its twelfth-century significance, Gillingham, 'From *Civilitas* to Civility', and Alison Goddard Elliott, 'The *Facetus*: or, The Art of Courtly Living', *Allegorica*, 2 (1977), 27–60, a translation of the mid-twelfth-century Latin poem. Further scholarship is cited in Peter Dronke, 'Pseudo-Ovid, *Facetus*, and the Arts of Love', *Mittelateinisches Jahrbuch*, 11 (1976), 126–31 (repr. in Dronke, *Latin and Vernacular Poets of the Middle Ages*, Collected Studies Series, 352 (Hampshire: Variorum, 1991), chap. 3, with identical pagination). For later collections, see Barbara Bowen's 'Renaissance Collections of *Facetiae*, 1344–1490: A New Listing' and 'Renaissance Collections of *Facetiae*, 1499–1528: A New Listing', both in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 39 (1986), 1–15, 263–75.

information on Gervase's later years is exiguous and sometimes conflicting, there has been considerable discussion of his life and work in the years after 1215, his continuing association with the Brunswick court, and his putative role in the design and execution of the Ebsdorf *mappa mundi*, particularly since Gervase noted in the *Otia* that he had included a map of the world for Otto in it, possibly the model for the larger Ebsdorf map.<sup>5</sup> As Richardson pointed out, this is quite a remarkable career even among those of Gervase's English Continental compatriots, running from Essex to Reims, Bologna, Sicily, Rome, Naples, Venice, Arles, Brunswick, and perhaps Ebsdorf. Gervase's geographical knowledge exceeded even his travels, particularly in the case of his extensive familiarity with Poland and other parts of Europe not widely known to his contemporaries. By any standard, Gervase was one of the great European geographers of the twelfth century.

For all of his wide and often surprising interests, abundantly illustrated in the tripartite *Otia imperialia* and the vast reading programme it reflects, Gervase was, by his own and other contemporary lights, a devout and knowledgeable Latin Christian, sentiments evident in the preface to the work and elsewhere. The first part of the *Otia* (Gervase terms the parts *decisiones*) is a long and rich account of Creation and the early history of the world, presented as a frequently interrupted commentary on Genesis up to the departure of Noah and his family from the Ark.<sup>6</sup> His devotional interests continue to be evident in the moralized history and geography of Part II, the world since the Flood, particularly the later chapters describing the Holy Land, and they are clearly evident even in many of the marvel stories that fill Part III and may well have been the reason for compiling the work in the first place, since marvels could also serve as a form of geographical

<sup>5</sup> On the life, see *Otia*, pp. xxv–xxxviii, and Armin Wolf, 'Gervasius von Tilbury und die Welfen: Zugleich Bemerkungen zur Ebsdorf Weltkarte', in *Die Welfen und ihr Braunschweiger Hof im hohen Mittelalter*, ed. by Bernd Schneidmüller, Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien, 7 (Wiesbaden: Harrossowitz, 1995), pp. 407–38, and Michael Rothmann, 'Mirabilia vero dicimus'. Wolf is one of the main proponents of Gervase's association with the Ebsdorf map. Another is the Polish scholar Jerzy Strzelczyk, *Gerwazy z Tilbury: Studium z dziejów uczoności geograficznej w średniowieczu* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1970), with English summary by Tadeusz Rybowski, pp. 271–78. Most recently, Bernd Ulrich Hucker, *Otto IV: Der wiederentdeckte Kaiser* (Frankfurt: Insel, 2003), pp. 502–08. Arno Borst assumes that Gervase was the same Gervase who was provost at Ebsdorf and designed the map: *Lebensformen im Mittelalter* (Frankfurt: Propyläen, 1973; repr. Hamburg: Nikol, 2004), pp. 144–45.

<sup>6</sup> *Otia*, I.2–15, 16–163. Some of Gervase's later concerns occur in his digressions on Genesis, such as the problem of the apparently broken vows of celibacy and virginity on the parts of Adam and Mary in I.21.

mnemonics.<sup>7</sup> They also occur in a well-known anecdote about (and allegedly by) Gervase that never made its way into the *Otia*, but is entirely consistent with both the devotional sentiment and the narrative technique of the author and will be the subject of the last part of this study.

And that is the framework of the subject of this essay: specifically, the occasions when Gervase considers religious misconduct or dissent from the perspective, not of a cleric with pastoral, magisterial, or disciplinary responsibilities, nor of a chronicler or epistolographer of the type that so frequently provides information on twelfth-century heterodoxy, and not even from that of a professional canonist, but from that of an extremely learned layman who has travelled up and down in the world, has formed firm opinions concerning religious truth,

<sup>7</sup> The Holy Land: *Otia*, II.23–24; especially the marvels in *Otia*, III.17–18, 23–26, 34–35, 46–47, 49, 54, and especially 103, for which see below. On the usefulness of marvels, see *Otia, Praef.*: ‘Quia igitur optimum nature fatigate remedium est amare novitates et gaudere variis [...]’; cf. Francis Dubost, *Aspects fantastiques de la littérature narrative médiévale (XII<sup>e</sup>–XIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*: *L’Autre, L’Ailleurs, L’Autrefois* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1991), pp. 43–45, 547–49, and Bea Lundt, *Melusine und Merlin im Mittelalter* (Munich: Fink, 1991). On marvels as original purpose of the entire treatise, see *Otia*, III, *Praef.* Although Jacques Le Goff frequently cites Gervase in his studies on the marvellous, he does not address the role of heresy in the genre: see Le Goff’s ‘Melusina: Mother and Pioneer’, in his *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 205–22; ‘The Marvelous in the Medieval West’, in his *Medieval Imagination*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 27–44. In many ways, several studies by Aron Gurevich are closer to the argument of this paper than those of Le Goff: ‘The *Elucidarium*: Popular Theology and Folk Religiosity in the Middle Ages’, and “High” and “Low”: The Medieval Grotesque’, both in Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 153–75, pp. 176–210, although both scholars tend to use an excessively formalistic distinction between learned and ‘popular’ culture (but Gurevich’s ‘Afterword’, pp. 211–25, is considerably more reflective and judicious). Now, see Caroline W. Bynum, ‘Wonder’, *American Historical Review*, 102 (1997), 1–26, an article that provides an inviting alternative framework for the concerns of Le Goff and Gurevich on these matters and should be read with them in mind. On Gervase and wonders, see Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone, 1998), pp. 21–66; on prodigies as divinely inspired signs, pp. 64–65. Gervase is certainly aware of some of the recent marvel-literature in the mid-twelfth-century *Mirabilia urbis Romae*, in *Otia*, II.8 (pp. 260–71). On the sometimes thin line between marvel and miracle, Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), pp. 201–13, and Susan Reynolds, ‘Social Mentalities and the Case of Medieval Scepticism’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, ser. 6, 1 (1991), 21–41 (pp. 29–30), discussing Gerald of Wales on the subject. On the pedagogical function of wonders, István Bejczy, *La Lettre du Prêtre Jean: Une utopie médiévale* (Paris: Imago, 2001).

and displays very little sympathy for those who contest its authoritative character. Recent scholarship has indicated the widening range of thinkers, including those who wrote for courts, who addressed and recorded the problem of heterodoxy in the late twelfth century, and Gervase was certainly one of them. But the devotional perspective is also considerably tempered by the storyteller's narrative technique, and that, too, must be part of any assessment of Gervase's attitude toward orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

Of Gervase's orthodox Latin Christian bonafides there can be very little if any doubt. The recently discovered *Commentary on the Lord's Prayer* and other lost devotional works attributed to him are hardly necessary to establish it.<sup>8</sup> His schooling, wherever he obtained it, was that of a late twelfth-century man of letters at a time when Latin schooling routinely included the *Historia scholastica* of Peter Comestor (extensively used and often quoted verbatim by Gervase) and other devotional learning in the curriculum.<sup>9</sup> The vast sea of references to devotional literature in the *Otia* indicates wide extracurricular reading as well. It should be noted that, although much of Gervase's material was indeed derivative, both his handling of it and the critical intelligence he applies to its difficulties (e.g., the problem of different names of the same province — *Otia* II.25, and to the problem of marvels as indicators of the imperfect state of the human knowledge of nature — *Otia*, III, *Praefatio*, a point also made by Gervase's contemporary, Gerald of Wales) mark Gervase as far more than a mere compiler. It should be noted that Gervase was a generation younger than Walter Map and Peter of Blois and a contemporary of Gerald of Wales, Alexander Nequam, and Innocent III. Moreover, Gervase was brought up in the world of Plantagenet devotional, literary, and artistic patronage and was associated in the later part of his career with the courts of the Archbishop of Arles and Otto IV, the latter itself influenced by Plantagenet and earlier Welf patronage.<sup>10</sup> Whatever the difficulties

<sup>8</sup> On the lost works, see *Otia*, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii, xcii–xcv.

<sup>9</sup> David Luscombe, 'Peter Comestor', in *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 4 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), pp. 109–29.

<sup>10</sup> On the lost devotional works, see *Otia*, pp. xcii–xcv; Hans Martin Schaller, 'Das geistige Leben am Hofe Kaiser Ottos IV. von Braunschweig', *Deutsches Archiv*, 45 (1989), 54–82, especially pp. 76–82; Bernd Ulrich Hucker, *Kaiser Otto IV*, MGH, Schriften, 34 (1990), pp. 115–86, 248–90, 342–45, and a number of the essays in *Die Welfen und ihr Braunschweiger Hof*. On the problem of provincial names and Gervase's discussion of his sources, *Otia*, II.25. On Gervase's originality, L. S. Chekin, 'Elements of the Rational Method in Gervase of Tilbury's Cosmology and Geography', *Centaureus*, 28 (1985), 209–17. The range of late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century thinkers who concerned themselves with heterodoxy has widened considerably. See

with ecclesiastical authorities in political matters on the part of Plantagenets and Welfs, the orthodoxy of devotional life at their courts seems undeniable.

The Preface of the *Otia*, immediately following the dedication, consists largely of a learned disquisition on the proper relations between spiritual and temporal authorities that reflects something of the original Gelasian dualism, and perhaps the dualist ideas of Gervase's teachers of canon law at Bologna.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the highly moralized *Kaiserspiegel* for Otto begun in the Preface continues from time to time in asides in all three books.<sup>12</sup> On matters of geographical ecclesiology, Gervase includes lists of episcopal sees in Asia and in Europe, the latter from a list that he obtained directly from the papal archives.<sup>13</sup> These, as well as Gervase's consistent interest in the redeeming Christ and the Eucharist, his wide knowledge

Jessalynn Lea Bird, 'The Construction of Orthodoxy and the (De)construction of Heretical Attacks on the Eucharist in *Pastoralia* from Peter the Chanter's Circle in Paris', in *Texts and the Repression of Medieval Heresy*, ed. by Caterina Bruschi and Peter Biller, York Studies in Medieval Theology, 4 (York: York Medieval Press, 2003), pp. 45–61. The antagonism between clerics and court intellectuals considered by Laurence Harf-Lançner, 'Les Malheurs des intellectuels à la cour: Les Clercs curiaux d'Henri II Plantagenêt', in *Courtly Literature and Clerical Culture*, ed. by Christoph Huber and Henrike Lähnemann (Tübingen: Attempo, 2001), pp. 3–18, extended to questions of morality, but not usually to those of heterodox religious belief. See C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 127–94.

<sup>11</sup> *Otia*, pp. xlii–lv; *Praef*, 2–13. See Joseph Canning, 'Power and the Pastor: A Reassessment of Innocent III's Contribution to Political Ideas', in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, ed. by John C. Moore (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), pp. 245–54, and generally, I. S. Robinson, 'Church and Papacy', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c. 350–c. 1450*, ed. by J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 252–305, and for the twelfth-century development, Robinson, *The Papacy, 1073–1198* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 293–524, and Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). On the state of interpretation of the Gelasian text in the late twelfth century, Robert L. Benson, 'The Gelasian Doctrine: Uses and Transformations', in *La Notion d'autorité au moyen âge: Islam, Byzance, Occident*, ed. by George Makdisi, Dominique Sourdel, and Janine Sourdel-Thomine (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1982), pp. 13–44. For the later period, J. A. Watt, 'Spiritual and Temporal Powers', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, chap. 14, pp. 367–423, and Kenneth Pennington, *The Prince and the Law* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 8–75.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., *Otia*, I.15; I.16; I.20; II.12; II.18–19; III.2; III.35; III.57; III.103, and elsewhere. On the genre, see Wilhelm Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegeln des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, MGH, Schriften, 2 (1938; repr. 1952). Berges tends to dismiss Gervase, but there is more to his political theory than simply wonders.

<sup>13</sup> *Otia*, II.4; II.9.

of Scripture, his relentlessly orthodox beliefs concerning the Sacraments, priestly powers and responsibilities, miracles (and his distinction between miracles and marvels), relics, his opposition to astrological determinism, and his interest in the afterlife, all indicate that Gervase was an articulate, educated, lay example of early thirteenth-century Latin Christian orthodoxy.

One of the most interesting examples of his combining these interests in a didactic narrative is the long tale related in *Otia* III.103. The tale begins with Gervase's dour criticism of those who do not believe ecclesiastical descriptions of the torments of hell, but insist instead on the testimony of people risen from the dead, even though such testimony is always rare and limited by God's will, and not everyone believes in ghosts. The kind of scepticism that Gervase addresses here is not necessarily rhetorical. As Susan Reynolds and others have shown, there appear to have been far more instances of medieval scepticism and occasional outright religious disbelief than once was thought and stoutly proclaimed. Gervase's introduction to the story sounds very much like many of those cited by Reynolds.<sup>14</sup>

The story is firmly dated to July 1211, and precisely located: in the kingdom of Arles, in the diocese and province of Arles, in the town of Beaucaire. A chaste girl of eleven was visited by a recently deceased young cousin named William from the town of Apt, who had been fatally wounded, forgave his assailant, made his last confession, received the viaticum, died, and was buried. That is, he died an ideal Christian death, forgiving his assailant, as had both Jesus and the papal legate Pierre de Castelnau, who had been murdered in 1208. William has returned with divine permission but can speak only to and through the girl. The rest of the tale is a virtual catechism of the afterlife, purgation, and the spiritual value in this life of the Sacraments, charity, guardian angels, and the moral purity of virginity, as well as the power of these in fending off the assaults of demons. Gervase frequently interlaces references to Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* as corroborations of points of dogma raised in the dead boy's tale. Here and elsewhere, Gervase's ability to expound dogma anecdotally strongly suggests the new roles of teacher, confessor, and preacher that were also emerging around the turn of the thirteenth century and led to the dialogues of Caesarius of Heisterbach, the *Gesta Romanorum*, and the vast homiletic repertoire of the mendicant preachers. The mendicant, particularly Dominican, use of such courtly writers as Gervase and Walter Map is striking and would repay further study. In some ways, Gervase's heirs are Thomas de Cantimpré and Vincent de Beauvais.

<sup>14</sup> Susan Reynolds, 'Social Mentalities', with extensive citations of the literature to date.

Against this orthodoxy, Gervase measures heterodoxy:

When asked if the death and extermination of the Albigensians [*Albiensium*] were pleasing to God, [the young man] replied that nothing that had ever been done in that region had pleased God so much; and he added that God wants the good to be separated from the bad on his Day of Judgment. Indeed, even the good, who have not stained their faith with heresy have sinned if they have tolerated it; while those who are burned here in the body are burned more severely after death in the spirit.<sup>15</sup>

For Gervase, although there may well be sceptics as to this or that particular doctrine, the *Albienses* are the real danger, the one version of heterodoxy to which he returns again and again. From his own perspective as imperial Marshal in Arles, of course, Gervase was well-acquainted with affairs in the county of Toulouse, just as he was with Aragonese matters. The reference to the fate of the *Albienses* above is very likely a direct reference to the massacre at Béziers in 1209. Gervase was married to a relative of Archbishop Imbert d'Aiguères, and Alfonso II of Aragon visited him in Arles. Gervase also sat as judge in Arlesian ecclesiastical and other courts and was resident in Arles between 1200 and 1209, when he visited Rome, and again between 1210 and 1215, perhaps even later, the early years of the Albigensian Crusade. As a result of the Battle of Muret of 1214, Gervase may well have considered the Albigensian cause entirely lost, whence the triumphalist tone in his account here.

<sup>15</sup> *Otia*, III.103 (pp. 778–79). Here, Gervase presents an intellectualist model of Albigensian beliefs. For a critique of this approach and the later historians who accept and use it, see the following works by Mark Gregory Pegg: 'On Cathars, Albigenses, and Good Men of Languedoc', *Journal of Medieval History*, 27 (2001), 181–95; *The Corruption of Angels: The Great Inquisition of 1245–1246* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); 'Catharism and the Study of Medieval Heresy', *New Medieval Literatures*, 6 (2003), 249–69. The best recent reassessment of scholarship on heresy is Peter Biller, 'Through a Glass Darkly: Seeing Medieval Heresy', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linchan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 308–26. Gervase's point about the punishment of those who tolerate heretics echoes Canon 27 of the Third Lateran Council of 1179, Lucius III's decretal *Ad abolendam*, of 1184, and Canon 3 of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. On the term itself, see Jean-Louis Biget, 'Les Albigeois: Remarques sur une denomination', in *Inventer l'hérésie? Discours polémiques et pouvoirs avant l'Inquisition*, ed. by Monique Zerner (Nice: Centre d'études médiévales, Faculté des lettres, arts et sciences humaines, Université de Nice Sophia-Antipolis, 2001), pp. 219–55, the most recent collection of studies on twelfth-century heterodoxy. On the episode in a broader context, Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Les Revenants: Les Vivants et les morts dans la société médiévale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), pp. 99–114, especially pp. 107–13, and for earlier assertions that revenants appeared only for spiritually beneficial purposes, see *Ottonian Germany: The 'Chronicon' of Thietmar of Merseburg*, trans. and annotated by David A. Warner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), I.11–13; VII.32–33. Further on marvels and faith, VII.67–71.

Elsewhere in the *Otia* he attacks *Albienses* early. He interrupts his discussion of the creation of the world in *Otia* I.2, with a diatribe against the confusion of the Albigenians (*confusio Albiensium*) concerning the two gods, good and evil, who created spirit and matter: 'the evil [god] makes the earth bring forth life under the impulse of lewd reproduction' (*Malus [deus] corrupta corpora creavit [...] facit terram motu meretrice conceptionis germinare*), citing in support of orthodoxy not only Scripture, Isidore of Seville, and Peter Comestor, but Lucan and Ovid as well!<sup>16</sup>

There is one other text on the subject, not quite by Gervase, but about him and an episode in his own life, that requires consideration in this context, particularly since it deals with heresy and is frequently cited by scholars as if it were a straightforward account. In his chronicle of the Cistercian monastery of Coggeshall, Essex (most likely written between 1180 and his election as abbot in 1207, although the composition of the chronicle poses several problems), Ralph of Coggeshall breaks off his account of the early reign of King John and Innocent III's call for what became the Fourth Crusade and tells his own series of local wonder tales: of a wild man of the woods caught in the nets of fishermen; of a boy and girl who emerged from the earth; of two giant teeth discovered in Essex at the town of Edolfsness; and of a certain fantastic spirit named Malekin.<sup>17</sup> Before taking up his historical narrative again, Ralph continues these marvel stories with a section called *De superstitione publicanorum*, which tells two stories concerning the pastoral activities of William of the White Hands, Archbishop of Reims, one of which concerns — and which Ralph says was told to him by — Gervase of

<sup>16</sup> *Otia*, I.2 (pp. 30–35). In *Otia*, III.23, one of the virtues of the image of Christ at Edessa is that its presence guarantees that there will be no heretics in the city. The *Gesta Romanorum* picks up this story of Gervase's (as CLIV), as well as *Otia*, III.59 (as CLV), and III.66 (as CLXII). As imperial marshal of Arles, Gervase is also very well informed concerning the affairs of Raymond VI of Toulouse (*Otia*, III.103), the Albigenian Crusade, and the kingdom of Aragon. In 1214 Raymond had (temporarily) lost Toulouse at the Battle of Muret, and it may well have seemed to Gervase that the entire Albigenian enterprise was over, perhaps colouring the categorical statement cited in *Otia*, III.103.

<sup>17</sup> *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 117–21. These are rather modest marvels compared to those of Gervase, but they seem to be the only ones that Essex had to offer. Not only were courtiers interested in marvels, but twelfth-century chroniclers as well frequently interrupted a historical narrative at critical points in order to insert moralizing marvel-stories, usually in groups like those of Ralph. On Ralph and his chronicle, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 322–31, and Elizabeth Freeman, 'Wonders, Prodigies and Marvels: Unusual Bodies and the Fear of Heresy in Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon anglicanum*', *Journal of Medieval History*, 26 (2000), 127–43.

Tilbury, 'as we heard later on, from his own mouth when he was a canon' (*sicut ab eius ore audivimus postea, cum canonicus esset*).<sup>18</sup>

After observing that in the reign of Louis VII (r. 1137–80) the errors of certain heretics, 'who were called Publicans by the crowd' (*qui vulgo appellantur Publicani*), began to be known, Ralph writes that a certain prodigy (*'prodigiosum quiddam'*) occurred in the province of Reims.

One day, while William of the White Hands was riding out in the countryside with several of his clerks, one of them, none other than Gervase himself, saw an attractive young woman walking alone in a vineyard, and 'led on by the curiosity of the lubricious youth' (*lubricae iuventutis curiositate ductus*), chatted her up and finally propositioned her (*'hanc tandem amore lascivo curialiter affatur'* — at least he did it in a curial, or courtly, manner). She rejected him, not because of modesty, but because she believed that if she ever lost her virginity she would be damned. Hearing this, Master Gervase immediately realized that she was a member of that 'most impious sect of Publicans' (*impiissima secta Publicani*). Gervase tried to convince her of the error of her doctrine (either anticipating an ultimately successful seduction by convincing her of the errors of her beliefs about the spiritual perils of lost virginity, or else dutifully propounding orthodox doctrine). At that moment William and his entourage rode up, discovered what was happening (one presumes that Gervase didn't tell the Archbishop quite the whole story), and took the young woman back with them to Reims.

There, the Archbishop and his clerks argued long and hard to instruct and dissuade her, but she remained firm in her beliefs, although she had not yet been fully instructed in them, and she also offered to bring to the court her much more learned mistress, who lived in the city. The older mistress was brought in, and she then proceeded to confound William and all of his clerks with her vast learning and ingenious turns of argument, no small feat, since William was well known as a patron of intellectuals. After a similar discussion the next day produced the same result, the Archbishop condemned both recalcitrant women to the flames. But the older woman scorned the verdict:

<sup>18</sup> Freeman, 'Wonders', pp. 121–28. The story of Gervase is pp. 121–25. The latter is translated in Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969; repr. 1991), pp. 251–54. Wakefield and Evans include the text, along with one by Walter Map from the *De nugis curialium*, under the heading 'From Heresy to Witchcraft', neglecting the centrality of the marvellous displayed in both stories and the twelfth-century link between heresy and marvels. The anecdote, however, appears neither in the author's MS of the *Otia* nor in any of the additional stories contained in later manuscripts: *Otia*, pp. 828–901. The story itself shows far more the hand of Gervase than that of Ralph.

O most insensate and unjust judges! Do you now fancy that you will burn me up with your fire? I do not fear your judgment, and I'm not horrified by the fire that you have prepared.

(O insensati et iudices injusti! Putatisne quod me ignibus vestris nunc concremabitis? Judicium vestrum non formido, et ignem preparatum non perhorresco.)

Saying this, she pulled out a ball of string from the bosom of her garment, held onto one end of it, threw the ball out the large window, shouted 'Recipe!', grasped the end of the ball, followed it out the window herself, and vanished. This was the work, Ralph says, of some malignant spirit, just like the earlier demonic flight of Simon Magus: 'But what became of her, or to what place she was transported, no one witnessing it could discover.' The lady was not for burning! The younger woman was indeed executed by fire, but she remained marvellously steadfast in her heterodox, if inexperienced, beliefs, much to the wonderment of Ralph.

Well, there we have a good late twelfth-century source for the history of heresy in northern France — or do we? Even assuming that it was in fact Gervase who told Ralph the story and that Ralph reported it accurately, it is a very peculiar and well-turned story (perhaps a bit too well-turned and possibly too self-incriminating for inclusion in the *Otia*, and hence more suited to the ears of a pious Cistercian chronicler out in rural Essex than those of an imperial court). The setting, as well as Gervase's initial encounter and conversation with the young woman, surely belongs to the genre of *pastourelle*, the popular Latin and vernacular literary form which consists of saucy verbal exchanges between a young man and a young woman, the man attempting to seduce and the woman finding ways to resist — or at least to give in gracefully and cleverly.<sup>19</sup> In this case, however, the *pastourelle* form has been gracefully adapted to frame a not uncommon twelfth-century phenomenon — the attempt on the part of a cleric to seduce a young woman and his subsequent accusation of heresy when she refused, a point made long ago by thirteenth-century preachers and more recently by Herbert Grundmann.<sup>20</sup> The episode of the ball of string is clearly another tale, a *narratio*

<sup>19</sup> *The Medieval Pastourelle*, ed. by William D. Paden, 2 vols (New York: Garland, 1987), I, 36–73, for twelfth-century examples; Michel Zink, *La Pastourelle: Poésie et folklore au moyen âge* (Paris: Bordas, 1972), especially pp. 64–75. Kathryn Gravdal, *Ravishing Maidens: Writing Rape in Medieval French Literature and Law* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 104–21.

<sup>20</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Steven Rowan, intro. by Robert E. Lerner (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), pp. 79–80. The work was originally published in 1935. Further material discussed in Caterina Bruschi and Peter Biller, 'Texts and the Repression of Heresy: Introduction', in *Texts and the Repression of Medieval*

*fabulosa*, Ralph's *prodigiosum quiddam*, the professed reason for his telling the marvel story in the first place. Gervase has deftly combined three different literary genres nearly seamlessly.

Even the scene at the Archbishop's court is not above suspicion. William's predecessor as Archbishop of Reims, Henry, was known to have been concerned with local heretics in 1162–63, but seems not to have known what to do about them. Although William of Reims, with Philip of Alsace, Count of Flanders, is recorded as trying and executing several heretics in 1183 or 1184, the date barely fits Ralph's chronology, nor does Gervase's story mention Philip of Alsace, although Ralph does, without casting Philip in this anecdote. William was an aristocratic scholar-prelate and a patron of scholars and poets, including Walter of Châtillon. He was the brother-in-law of Louis VII and the maternal uncle of Philip Augustus. He had been consulted by Pope Clement III in his effort to find appropriately learned experts to assess the theological content of the scriptural commentaries of Ralph Niger. He was (while Archbishop of Sens, 1168–75) the dedicatee of Peter Comestor's *Historia scholastica*, and he seems to have been directly responsible for John of Salisbury's appointment to the see of Chartres. While Philip II was away on crusade, William, with the Queen Mother Adela, was appointed by the King to give cathedral chapters permission to elect successors to deceased bishops and to convey the regalia upon the elect's consecration. Thanks to Lambert of Ardres, we catch a more intimate glimpse of him on pilgrimage en route to Canterbury, deftly deflecting the profligate hospitality of Baldwin II of Guines.<sup>21</sup> William's household clerks, like those of Theobald of Canterbury a

*Heresy* (see n. 10, above), pp. 3–19 (pp. 9–12); Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitorial Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 229; John H. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London: Arnold, 2005), p. 31. On the theme in the *bibles moralisées*, Gerald B. Guest, "'The Darkness and Obscurity of Sins': Representing Vice in the Thirteenth-Century *Bibles moralisées*", in *In the Garden of Evil: The Vices and Culture in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard Newhauser (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2005), pp. 74–103. On heresy in Reims in the late twelfth century, see R. I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (New York: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 183–85, and Henri Maisonneuve, *Études sur les origines de l'inquisition* (Paris: Vrin, 1960), pp. 117–21.

<sup>21</sup> Aspects of William's career are considered in Peter Godman, *The Silent Masters: Latin Literature and its Censors in the High Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 26–27, 176–77. On the patronage of William of Reims, see John R. Williams, 'William of the White Hands and Men of Letters', in *Anniversary Essays in Medieval History by Students of Charles Homer Haskins* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929), pp. 365–87. On the visit to Guines, see Lambert of Ardres, *The History of the Counts of Guines and Lords of Ardres*, trans. by Leah Shopkow (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), pp. 120–22. On Peter Comestor,

generation earlier, could easily hold their own with the most able theologians of their day.

The procedure of the Archbishop's interrogation between these two genre-episodes follows to the letter the norms of late twelfth-century Romano-canonical procedure, on which Gervase as a canonist was an expert; it is virtually a model episcopal trial of heterodoxy, the only kind of such trial that the twelfth century knew.<sup>22</sup> The women frankly stated their heterodox beliefs (although only the issue of the perils of lost virginity figures in the anecdote), had their error pointed out to them, were properly instructed in orthodox doctrine, declined to accept legitimate instruction, and were therefore self-confessed, unrepentant, and contumacious heretics. The Archbishop of Reims was judge ordinary in his own diocese. He and his learned clerks had properly and expeditiously fulfilled their pastoral duties in questioning and instructing the women. There is no mention of coercion in the story, and even the doubtless unfamiliar curial setting and the presence of learned clerks seems to have intimidated neither woman. Nor is there any indication that either was asked about other doctrines or heretics in the city of Reims, although the younger woman freely volunteered the name of her better-instructed mistress, and the older woman does seem to have discussed a wider range of doctrinal points with William's clerks than the necessity of virginity.

Ralph's summary description of Publicani beliefs that follows the episode (although it is not clear that this summary had been provided by Gervase, since there is no syntactical or rhetorical connection to the preceding story, nor does Ralph indicate whether this information, too, is from Gervase) simply explains the difference between true Christian piety and heretical obstinacy as an explanation of the young woman's fortitude, but, while it is generally consistent with Gervase's statements about *Albienses* in *Otia* 1.2, it also seems awkwardly appended to the episode itself. Moreover, it contains a far more extensive itemization of heterodox

Luscombe, 'Peter Comestor', p. 118. See also Jessalynn Bird, 'The Construction of Orthodoxy': On William and Walter of Châtillon', in *Galteri de castellione Alexandreis*, ed. by Marvin Colker (Padua: Antenore, 1978), pp. xv–xvi.

<sup>22</sup> On episcopal disciplinary powers and procedures, see, most recently, Elena Brambilla, *Alle origini del Sant'Uffizio: Penitenza, confessione e giustizia spirituale dal medioevo al XVI secolo* (Bologna: Società editrice il Mulino, 2000), pp. 89–110, and several of the essays in *Praedicatores, Inquisitores I, the Dominicans and the Medieval Inquisition: Acts of the 1st International Seminar on the Dominicans and the Inquisition, 23–25 February 2002*, Institutum historicum fratrum Praedicatorum Romae, Dissertationes historicae, fasciculus 29 (Rome: Istituto storico domenicano, 2004), and my review essay, 'Quoniam abundavit iniquitas: Dominicans as Inquisitors, Inquisitors as Dominicans', *Catholic Historical Review*, 91 (2005), 105–21. On Gervase's expertise on notorious crimes and summary justice, *Otia*, 1.19.

beliefs than Gervase ever gives. It is also an early example of an anti-heretical text that not only describes the beliefs of heretics, but also their illegitimate activities. Finally, the sly rhetoric of heretics in theological debate, apparently confounding the most theologically proficient of questioners, had by then become a topos in both the literature of heresy and in anti-curial and anti-scholastic satire.<sup>23</sup> Source perhaps, but story certainly.

Several of the elements in Ralph's story, if not the story itself, also appear in the *Otia*. As noted above, on one occasion Gervase defends appropriate (if youthful) virginity in III.103. In I.15, another proposition of wanton love turns into brief domestic happiness when the lady insists on marriage. After the religious reform movements in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, celibacy, virginity, and marriage were extensively rethought by theologians, moralists, and poets. Celibacy was indeed imposed on monks, nuns, canons regular, recluses, hermits, and secular clergy above the rank of subdeacon, and later on the mendicant orders.<sup>24</sup> For laywomen, virginity remained a virtue, but in most cases only until marriage — witness the debates over the vows of Christina of Markyate earlier and Joan of Arc much later. Unless preserved in appropriate circumstances and under appropriate

<sup>23</sup> Peter Biller, 'Northern Cathars and Higher Learning', in *The Medieval Church: Universities, Heresy, and the Religious Life; Essays in Honour of Gordon Leff*, ed. by Peter Biller and Barrie Dobson, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 11 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 25–54; Dyan Elliott, *Proving Woman*, p. 235. For the 1183–84 trials, see Wakefield and Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, p. 257. The Latin text appears in *Annales et Chronica Aevi Salici*, ed. by L. C. Bethmann, *Continuatio Acquicinctina, ad an. 1183*, MGH, Scriptores, 6 (1844), p. 421.

<sup>24</sup> *Medieval Purity and Piety: Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, ed. by Michael Frassetto (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1998). See Christopher Brooke's citation of the poem by Matthew of Vendôme, in which a lady, similarly approached, responds, 'Respuo moechari; volo nubere': 'Gregorian Reform in Action: Clerical Marriage in England, 1050–1200', in his *Medieval Church and Society* (New York: New York University Press, 1972), pp. 69–99 (p. 96). Brooke is quoting F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), II, 33–34. In seventy-four distichs the lady rejects the amorous clerk for a knight: 'si vellem Veneri succumbere, nulla scolari | talia, sed laico primicianda darem'. The antagonism between clerics and other court intellectuals has been considered by Laurence Harf-Lancner, 'Les Malheurs des intellectuels à la cour', and Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness*, pp. 127–94. On the opposition of clerks and knights in this and other matters in which status and *ordo* were at stake, see Josef Fleckenstein, 'Miles und clericus am Königs- und Fürstenhof: Bemerkungen zu den Voraussetzungen, zur Entstehung und zur Trägerschaft der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur', in *Curialitas: Studien zu Grundfragen der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur*, ed. by Fleckenstein (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), pp. 302–25, and C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

ecclesiastical supervision, however, female virginity ran the risk of being misinterpreted, not only for erroneous theological reasons by Gervase's unlucky young woman and perhaps others like her, but, as in the case of Christina of Markyate, by a certain public and private anxiety over its appropriateness in the case of an otherwise eminently marriageable young woman.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the heightened status of marriage and procreation, which emerged in the theologically and legally legitimated activities of the laity, raised further questions about the increasingly ambiguous place of virginity in lay life.<sup>26</sup> Gervase on virginity reflects most of these concerns.

There are other stories of a similar kind in the *Otia*. In *Otia* I.15, the knight Raymond, lord of the castle of Rousset, near Aix, encounters a beautiful young woman and also propositions her. This woman, however, quite properly insists on marriage first, promising sexual pleasure indeed, but also fine children and great material prosperity, but only on the one condition that he never see her naked. The couple did marry, and, as the woman had prophesied, had several children. They lived for a time in prosperity, until Raymond violated the condition and saw his naked wife turn into a serpent and disappear. She is said to return sometimes at night to visit her children, and although she is heard by their nurses, she is never seen. The knight indeed lost his great prosperity and reputation, but he married one of his daughters to a kinsman of Gervase (or perhaps of his wife) among the Provençal nobility, and their descendants survive locally down to Gervase's

<sup>25</sup> *The Life of Christina of Markyate: A Twelfth-Century Recluse*, ed. and trans. by C. H. Talbot (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Christopher J. Holdsworth, 'Christina of Markyate', in *Medieval Women, Studies in Church History: Subsidia 1*, ed. by Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), pp. 185–204; *Christina of Markyate*, ed. by Samuel Fanous and Henrietta Leyser (London: Routledge, 2004). On the general topic, see *Medieval Virginites*, ed. by Anke Bernau, Ruth Evans, and Sarah Salih (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

<sup>26</sup> There is a dramatic example in Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 109–10. Parallel to these concerns was the increasing interest in secondary processes of creation in Latin philosophical and moral poetry of the twelfth century, many of which included a rich sexual imagery, for which see Newman, George D. Economou, *The Goddess Natura in Medieval Literature* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), and Hugh White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness in a Medieval Literary Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 8–47, 68–109. The classic statement is M.-D. Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, trans. by Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 1–48. Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing Unto Others* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 28–58. Further on the powers of virginity in the case of demons, *Otia*, I.17, III.93.

own day. In this case, as in others, the story may well have been a local dynastic foundation-legend. Gervase offers no explanation of the reason why the lady vanished, but he does allow for the possibility of the wonder, connecting the phenomenon to both werewolves and the kind of shapeshifting found in Apuleius and Augustine. The story is a Provençal contribution to the ur-history of the Melusine legend,<sup>27</sup> but it is also (as are several others) an object-lesson in the importance of domestic tranquillity and the risks of its violation by insensate husbands.

Yet another lady vanishes in III.57, the lady of the castle of L'Eparvier, who always left Mass immediately after the Gospel, 'for she could not bear to be present at the consecration of the Lord's body'. When her long-suffering husband and his retainers forced her back into the church one day, she was carried off by a demon and disappeared, 'and she was seen no more in those parts', their departure so furious that it destroyed some of the fabric of the chapel (was it, one wonders, the same demon as at Reims — rather a specialist in marvellous escapes) and caused the collapse of the castle itself. Gervase follows the story with a long gloss on proper behaviour during Mass, a sacramental clergy, tithes, and remaining present at liturgical ceremonies until they end.<sup>28</sup>

Stories that associate heresy with wonders, like those of Gervase and Walter Map, may be considered partly in terms of what G. T. Shepherd once called 'the emancipation of story in the twelfth century'.<sup>29</sup> According to Shepherd, the late

<sup>27</sup> *Otia*, I.15. On the Melusine legend, see Le Goff's essay, cited above, n. 6, the note of Banks and Binns, pp. 90–92, and the study of Lundt, *Melusine und Merlin*. The tale is discussed in Laurence Harf-Lancner, *Les Fées au moyen âge: Morgane et Mélusine; la naissance des fées* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1984), pp. 150–54. Some of the elements in Gervase's tales appeared somewhat earlier in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*, especially in I.30–31, on heretics and marvels, II.11–14 (II.12 is the story of Edric Wild, another version of the Melusine legend, parallel to Gervase's I.15), and IV.9, a parallel to Gervase's III.57). On Walter's supernatural wives, Alberto Vàrvaro, *Apparizioni fantastiche: Tradizioni folcloriche e letteratura nel medioevo* (Milan: Mulino, 1994), pp. 69–90. On other aspects of the serpent-woman tradition, Karen Smith, 'Snake-maiden Transformation Narratives in Hagiography and Folklore', *Fabula*, 43 (2002), 251–63, and Bea Lundt, *Auf der Suche nach der Frau im Mittelalter* (Munich: Fink, 1991), pp. 233–53. There are echoes of both the concealed object of love and of shapeshifting in the *lais* of Marie de France, e.g., *Bisclavet* and *Launval*. See *Otia*, III.43 and III.86.

<sup>28</sup> This is a favourite insistence of Gervase. See also *Otia*, I.20.

<sup>29</sup> G. T. Shepherd, 'The Emancipation of Story in the Twelfth Century', in *Medieval Narrative: A Symposium* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979), pp. 44–57. Shepherd does not consider philosophical *fabulae*, for which see Peter Dronke, *Fabula: Explorations into the Uses of Myth in Medieval Platonism* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), especially pp. 13–78, a useful supplement and

antique and early medieval derogation of *fabula* and their tellers, evident as late as the *Elucidarium* of Honorius of Autun and the literary strictures of Conrad of Hirsau, gave way in the work of Petrus Alfonsi, Anselm of Canterbury, Gerald of Wales, and Walter Map — Shepherd would certainly have included Gervase in the process had it occurred to him — to the emancipation of story in the service of the culture of lay courts. Gervase himself acknowledges the need to distance himself and his wonders from ‘the lying tongues of players and actors’, and to present to great men reliable accounts, especially of edifying wonders, based on the wisdom of ancient authors or eyewitness testimony that can be confirmed.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, many of his wonders are precisely located and dated in recent years and in known and identified places and not drawn from remote and earlier compendia.

Greater and lesser folk at courts, and readers and hearers of historical narratives, indeed needed to be informed and instructed about the world they lived in, but they could not be instructed by literary and pedagogical methods better suited to the cloister or the schools. And they learned most readily through story. For them, as Walter Map and Gervase knew, story was required, not because their audience lived in an ‘oral’ culture or on the edge of a ‘folk’ culture, but rather because they were mostly Latin-analphabetic, but intelligent, and in the vernacular often respectably learned and sceptical.<sup>31</sup> They required their learning in a certain form, and, as Caroline Bynum has eloquently suggested, one of those forms was edifying and memorable wonder, easily adapted and conveyed through story. Indeed, Gervase seems to imply that a capacity for wonder is essential to humans, since it reminds them of the infinite powers of God: ‘There are some

corrective to Shepherd, as is the astute discussion by Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), especially pp. 55–98. There are a number of sharp observations on the character of similar medieval narratives in Alain Boureau, *The Myth of Pope Joan*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 119, 131–36, and Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999; repr. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). Most recently, John V. Fleming, ‘Muses of the Monastery’, *Speculum*, 78 (2003), 1071–1106.

<sup>30</sup> *Otia, Praef.* See Bynum, ‘Wonder’, especially pp. 12–14, 19–23. John Van Engen has made a similar point about letters of the period: ‘Letters, Schools, and Written Cultures in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries’, in *Dialektik und Rhetorik im früheren und hohen Mittelalter*, ed. by Johannes Fried (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), pp. 97–132. On the later appropriation of the marvellous in the more focused work of thirteenth-century heresiologists, see Christine Caldwell, ‘Doctors of Souls: Inquisition and the Dominican Order, 1231–1331’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2002), pp. 229–32.

<sup>31</sup> See the wise cautionary remarks of Reynolds, ‘Social Mentalities’.

people who do not believe in anything supernatural, and even if they do not know the reason for things, they do not marvel at their existence' (*Otia*, III.92).

To be sure, courts also needed to be formally instructed, and in Gervase's work, that instruction operates on two levels: the doctrinal condemnation of *Albienses* in *Otia* I.2, but more effectively in the stories elsewhere in the work, for example, III.57 and III.103. This is not, *pace* Wakefield and Evans, an instance of a turn 'from heresy to witchcraft', since that process lay a century or more in the future. One of the women in the story of Ralph/Gervase is indeed formally condemned and executed; the woman who has confounded the learned clerks of the Archbishop's court simply vanishes. The older woman is clearly a fully developed prophetic double of the younger; she is what the younger would become if she persisted in her heretical defence of virginity, making the episode memorable, but also illustrating the inevitable, further descent into heretical depravity once any young woman is ensnared by even a single heretical doctrine.

But not all of Gervase's vanishing ladies vanish for the same reason. The ur-Melusine story indeed deals with a woman's dramatic disappearance, but in the context of a broken marriage contract and its sad consequences. After several years of domestic happiness and prosperity provided solely by the woman, the husband returns home one day, trophied and bloody from the hunt. A lustful humour is upon him, and he breaks his promise not to see his wife naked. The appropriate consequences that the woman had predicted follow — there is no fault in the woman, since the husband alone has violated an essential area of marital privacy which he had originally agreed to observe, although, as Gervase says, his original agreement to marriage was made in the heat of passion: 'he regarded any condition as easy which enabled him to gain the desired access to her bed.' The story is pure Provençal foundation-myth. It also comes very early in the *Otia*. I suggest that the Ralph-story and the other episodes of disappearance are not part of any Melusine genre, but play on several of its features to teach very different, if no less urgent, lessons. Wonders reveal the range of powers at work in the world and sometimes the dangers of some of those powers. Toward the end of Part III, Gervase attempts, not entirely successfully, to sort them out. *Otia* III.85–86, 92–93, and 103 offer provisional taxonomies of spectral beings, shape-shifting, a learned demonology, and a set of prophylactic prayers to ward off such beings, again citing Augustine and Apuleius. Gervase adventurously offers a full spectrum of explanations of these wonders that allows for legitimate wonder without any hint of paganism or superstition but also without any certainty of explanation. Not incidentally, the long and didactic III.103 virtually closes the case in the *Otia*. So we must recognize both the similarities and dissimilarities in the cases of disappearing women in the *Otia* and Ralph of Coggeshall.

Like the lady of L'Eparvier, and, in this case at least, the proto-Melusine, the woman who will vanish is without a local family or identity, normally inaccessible, always without relatives of her own, and set apart by a secret and by access to perilous powers beyond the human. She becomes temporarily accessible only conditionally, and in story the conditions, of course, can never be safely met.<sup>32</sup> Once the condition fails and the mystery is revealed, there is no imaginable future with or for such women. As the poet said, they must leave those realms whose courts they have confused. And there is nothing else for such occasional, exemplary ladies to do, but vanish.

<sup>32</sup> A similar point is made by Anita Guerreau-Jalabert, 'Fées et chevalerie: observations sur le sens social d'un thème dit merveilleux', in *Miracles, prodiges, et merveilles au moyen âge* (see n. 3, above), pp. 134–50. In Marie de France's *Lanval*, the knight does violate the condition that his fairy lover never be spoken of, but the lady apparently relents and saves the knight in his trial at Arthur's court. They both then vanish to Avalon. Most recently, Lundt, *Melusine und Merlin*, pp. 41–66, and Richard Horvath, 'Romancing the Word: *Fama* in the Middle English *Sir Launfal* and *Athelston*', in *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Smail (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 165–86, and R. Howard Bloch, *The Anonymous Marie de France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Intellectual Transitions  
to the Early Modern World



‘CONSTANT EXERCISE’:  
A LATE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY PROGRAMME  
OF STUDIES — RUDOLPH AGRICOLA’S LETTERS  
TO ALEXANDER HEGIUS OF DEVENTER AND  
JACOBUS BARBIRIANUS OF ANTWERP

Arjo Vanderjagt

**M**arcia Colish’s eloquent and exhilarating *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge* in a single moment made up my mind in late 1972 to enter the vast field of medieval studies.<sup>1</sup> In this present volume in her honour, it is only fitting that my remarks on the educational programme of the late fifteenth-century humanist pedagogue, dialectician, and scholar of the Bible, Rudolph Agricola, depart from the astute concluding insight at the end of her first book into the theory of signs in religious knowledge in the thought of Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante Alighieri:

I wish to express my gratitude to the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences at Wassenaar (NIAS) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and to its rector, Professor Wim Blockmans, for having provided me with shelter and a scholarly community in which to write part of this paper in the autumn of 2005.

<sup>1</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge*, Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany, 68, 2nd edn (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968). For the profound experience this book earlier and its author on meeting her in 1979 at the Canterbury Anselm Conference afforded me, see my ‘Een geleerde gelijkenis: J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* and Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language*’, *Madoc: Tijdschrift over de middeleeuwen*, 17 (2003), 21–27.

Their basic similarities derive from the fact that they possess a common core of Christian ideas on the ways in which man may know God by faith, *per speculum in aenigmate*. All four of them believe that religious knowledge is always mediated through Christ the Word in this life. All four combine this belief with a verbal species of sign theory derived from classical antiquity by way of the trivium. This classical sign theory provides them with their mental tools, with the Stoic conviction that words are accurate signs of the things they signify, and with the Aristotelian certainty that sense data conduce authentically to knowledge of prior and non-sensible realities. The differences among the four thinkers are dictated largely by the fact that each inherits, and in some cases helps to crystallize, a stress on one or the other of the disciplines of the trivium.<sup>2</sup>

Almost thirty years later, in her *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400*, Colish carefully but decisively, as is her wont, delimits the medieval world of ideas to the end of the fourteenth and the very beginning of the fifteenth centuries.<sup>3</sup> In my contribution I will try to show something of the continuity of what Colish has found common in Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante Alighieri into the late fifteenth-century circle of northern humanism centred on Aduard and 's-Heerenberg of which Agricola was the heart and soul.<sup>4</sup> First I will give a brief sketch of that late fifteenth-century humanism.

<sup>2</sup> Colish, *The Mirror of Language*, p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 352–59; cf. her 'When Did the Middle Ages End? Reflections of an Intellectual Historian', in *Schooling and Society: The Ordering and Re-ordering of Knowledge in the Western Middle Ages*, ed. by Alasdair A. MacDonald and Michael W. Twomey (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 213–23.

<sup>4</sup> For Agricola's works see Gerda C. Huisman, *Rudolph Agricola: A Bibliography of Printed Works and Translations* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1985). For his main work: Rudolf Agricola, *De inventione dialectica / Drie Bücher über die Inventio dialectica*, ed. and trans. by Lothar Mundt (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992). For a selection from his works: Rodolphe Agricola, *Écrits sur la dialectique et l'humanisme*, ed. and trans. by Marc van der Poel (Paris: Champion, 1997). For his correspondence: Rudolph Agricola, *Letters*, ed. and trans. by Adrie van der Laan and Fokke Akkerman (Assen: Royal Van Gorcum, 2002). For Agricola and his circle: *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)*, ed. by Fokke Akkerman and Arjo Vanderjagt (Leiden: Brill, 1988); *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Northern Humanism*, ed. by Fokke Akkerman, Arjo Vanderjagt, and Gerda Huisman (Leiden: Brill, 1993); *Rudolf Agricola 1444–1485: Protagonist des nordeuropäischen Humanismus zum 550. Geburtstag*, ed. by Wilhelm Kühlmann (Bern: Lang, 1994); *Northern Humanism in European Context: From the 'Adwert Academy' to Ubbo Emmius*, ed. by Fokke Akkerman, Arjo Vanderjagt, and Adrie van der Laan (Leiden: Brill, 1999). For Agricola's use of language and grammar, see Adrie H. van der Laan, 'Anatomie van een taal: Rodolphus Agricola en Antonius Liber aan de wieg van het humanistisch Latijn in de Lage Landen (1469–1485)' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Groningen, 1998). The logical and

Concentrating then on Agricola's pedagogy as he put it forward in his correspondence with Alexander Hegius (c. 1439–1498), schoolmaster at Deventer, and Jacobus Barbirianus (1455–1491), choirmaster at Antwerp, attention will be given to the place in it of the *artes liberales*.

### *The Northern Humanism of Agricola and his Circle*

There is no denying and no one would want to do so that the name of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469–1536) is as inextricably attached to humanism and its rise in Europe north of the Alps as Francesco Petrarca of Arezzo (1304–1374) is to the renaissance of humanist studies in Italy and, in fact, *tout court*.<sup>5</sup> In a felicitous play on words reminding the reader of Petrarch's famous purported ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1336, Johannes Lindeboom in his seminal, magisterial *Het bijbels humanisme in Nederland: Erasmus en de vroege reformatie* of 1913 writes that the figure of Erasmus dominates his literary and intellectual surroundings like a mighty mountain, which forces a climbing traveller to reckon with its own majesty every time a new vista is revealed.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, Lindeboom places the various scholars, *magistri*, theologians, and humanists of the Low Countries who were precursors and followers of Erasmus in the latter's shadow while at the same time focusing his learned, especially theological limelight on them individually.

rhetorical elements in Agricola are masterfully treated in Peter Mack, *Renaissance Argument: Valla and Agricola in the Traditions of Rhetoric and Dialectic* (Leiden: Brill, 1993); see also the important discussion of Agricola in Ann Moss, *Renaissance Truth and the Latin Language Turn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 'deconstructs' the fame of Agricola as an invention of Erasmus to emphasize his own importance (see below).

<sup>5</sup> This section is a slightly rewritten version of my article published in the local bulletin of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study at Wassenaar: 'The Expanding World of Northern Humanism', *NIAS Newsletter*, 36 (Spring, 2006), 26–28; cf. Arjo Vanderjagt, 'Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Rudolph Agricola (1443?–1485)', in *Frömmigkeit — Theologie — Frömmigkeitstheologie: Contributions to European Church History; Festschrift für Berndt Hamm zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. by Gudrun Litz, Heidrun Munzert, and Roland Liebenberg (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 159–72.

<sup>6</sup> Johannes Lindeboom, *Het bijbels humanisme in Nederland: Erasmus en de vroege reformatie*, intro. by Cornelis Augustijn (Leiden: Adriani, 1913; repr. Leeuwarden: Dykstra, 1982), pp. 112–13.

Erasmus, who had a high regard of self, would have been pleased; he discusses his debts to his 'masters' and his positive opinion of fellow humanists in the northern Low Countries above the IJssel River and in Westphalia at length in a letter to Cornelius Aurelius of 1489 and in his *Ciceronianus* of 1528.<sup>7</sup> Prime among these is Rudolph Agricola Phrisius (1443/44–1485) of Baflo and Groningen, a foremost literary scholar and subtle Latin stylist, inventor of a new rhetorical logic which was to inform scholars and university curricula for more than a century, a pedagogue, letter writer, musician, poet, organ builder, inveterate traveller and also a local politician, a scholar of Greek, a sportsman of sorts — among others, boxing — and, close to the end of his short life, a lone northern student of Hebrew.<sup>8</sup> Erasmus waxes eloquent, too, about Alexander Hegius, born in Westphalia, the master of the school which had trained him at Deventer, above Zwolle on the IJssel. He does not mention Jacobus Barbirianus of Antwerp.<sup>9</sup>

The third chapter of Lisa Jardine's important and highly provocative *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* is entitled 'Inventing Rudolph Agricola: Recovery and Transmission of the *De inventione dialectica*'.<sup>10</sup> Here and in the ensuing chapters, Jardine argues that Erasmus's use of Agricola's name, the names of the latter's colleagues, and the publication history of Agricola's *De inventione* is to tell 'the story of a carefully constructed northern curriculum and pedagogy — the construction of pedagogic charisma in print'. She goes on to argue that 'the accumulating textual references to Agricola (and his circle of friends and those who published his works) as intellectual and spiritual ancestor to Erasmus of Rotterdam are part of a *purposive* narrative, emanating from Erasmus himself'. Thus, according to Jardine, Erasmus's high estimation of his 'peers' actually has little to do with them, but everything with Erasmus's balancing of his self-awareness with the Italian renaissance, jump-started by Petrarch. Erasmus thus knew exactly what he was doing when he was, as it were, writing his own intellectual biography. In fact, Jardine interprets Erasmus as repudiating his debt to Agricola and to the learned schoolmaster Hegius in the polemical *Spongia* of 1523. One might quibble with Lisa Jardine over her reading and interpretation of the Latin which she cites in favour of her view, but she has encouraged the small

<sup>7</sup> See nn. 12 and 13, below.

<sup>8</sup> The first full biography of Agricola is Henricus E. J. M. van der Velden, *Rodolphus Agricola (Roelof Huisman): Een Nederlandsch humanist der vijftiende eeuw* (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1911); see also the bibliography given in n. 4, above.

<sup>9</sup> For Hegius, and Barbirianus, see below, pp. 204–05 and 205–06.

<sup>10</sup> Jardine, *Erasmus*, chap. 3.

chorus which is putting the examination of northern humanism 'around' Erasmus on the scholarly research programme of students of late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century northern humanisms (and their relation to contemporary philosophical and religious polemics).

For a field far less known than that of the Italian Renaissance and the general European Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it is useful to indicate the lay of the landscape for our humanist vagabonds, and vagabonds they were, travelling incessantly in their native terrains but also to and fro between Italian, French and other European cities and towns where scholarship and especially literary and historical learning to their critical taste might be had. It is delimited both geographically and intellectually by three more or less contemporary sources: (1) a letter from Goswinus van Halen (c. 1468–1530), servant to Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) of Groningen — the precursor of Luther as that reformer himself acknowledged — to the German reformer Albert Hardenberg (1510–1574) about the wide circle of learned men who had been meeting from the 1460s onwards at the Cistercian abbey of St Bernard at Aduard (= Adwert) near Groningen;<sup>11</sup> (2) the letter of 1489 mentioned above from Erasmus to Cornelius Aurelius;<sup>12</sup> and (3) a long passage from Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* of 1528, which famously begins with 'Let's move on to Frisia if you're ready. That country really does produce what they call minds of the brightest and the best'.<sup>13</sup> Both Erasmian sources continue immediately after this with a discussion of the scholars of Wesphalia. Northern humanism can thus easily be geographically defined by Frisia — roughly today's Dutch provinces of Friesland and Groningen and Germany's Ostfriesland — the banks of the IJssel River, and Westphalia. Roughly speaking, this is the landmass to the north and the north-east of the IJssel and the

<sup>11</sup> Goswinus van Halen's letter to Hardenberg is printed in Wessel Gansfort, *Opera*, ed. by Petrus Pappus à Tratzberg (Groningen: Iohannes Sassius, 1614; fasc. repr. Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1966), pp. \*\*4–\*\*5; for a translation into Dutch, see Fokke Akkerman and Catrien G. Santing, 'Rudolf Agricola en de Aduarder Academie', *Groningse Volksalmanak* (1987), 7–28.

<sup>12</sup> *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, ed. by Percy S. Allen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1906), I, Epistola 23, pp. 103–09; *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1 to 141, 1484–1500*, trans. and ed. by Roger B. Mynors, Douglas F. S. Thomson, and Wallace K. Ferguson, Collected Works of Erasmus (= CWE), I (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), Letter 23, pp. 36–41.

<sup>13</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Dialogus Ciceronianus*, ed. by Pierre Mesnard, in *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing, 1969–), I, pt 2, 581–710 (pp. 678–84); CWE, 28 (1986), trans. and ed. by Brett I. Knott, pp. 323–638 (pp. 424–27).

Rhine. This is the area that hosted what Agricola once called 'the Republic of Learning of my home country'.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to the group of scholars devoted to the 'new' learning which met regularly in the abbey at Adwert and was stimulated over several decades by its abbot Hendrik van Rees, the stronghold of the lords of Bergh at 's-Heerenbergh not far from Arnhem but closer to Emmerich also hosted a loose group of roving humanists.<sup>15</sup> Here under the aegis and patronage of Maurice, Count of Spiegelberg, they were stimulated again by the intellect of Agricola, who appears to have served as a lynchpin for much humanist endeavour between Adwert and 's-Heerenbergh, Deventer, where Hegius taught, and Heidelberg, where Agricola was to die soon after his appointment there to a chair. Add to this the facts that towns such as Kampen, Zwolle, Deventer, and Cologne boasted the first printers of the Low Countries such as Simon Corver, Richard Paffraet, and Jacobus of Breda and that medicine was practised there at the same time by the so-called 'humanist medical doctors' and a clear picture begins to emerge of Agricola's Republic of Learning.<sup>16</sup> It is a matter for much further study to find an explanation for the fact that this region engendered so much literary ('poetic'), historical, and theological humanism. Part of an answer no doubt is that the Latin schools of this area — especially those of Groningen and Deventer — had a long history dating back almost two centuries. They drew in hundreds of students who were taught good Latin and also imbued with a sense of practical religiosity closely connected to the Modern Devotion, which had developed especially in the IJssel Valley and indeed had made deep inroads into the north-eastern and eastern German lands even beyond East Frisia and Westphalia.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Agricola in a letter to the young Johannes Reuchlin in 1484, CWE, 1, Letter 41, pp. 230–31: 'Cupiui enim pro virili mea, si qua possem, literariae reipublicae patriae nostrae prodesse'.

<sup>15</sup> Gregor Hövelmann, *Moritz Graf von Spiegelberg (1406/07–1483): Domberr in Köln, Propst in Emmerich, Mäzen und Stifter* (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1987).

<sup>16</sup> For early printing in the IJssel Valley: *Humanistische Buchkultur: Deutsch-Niederländische Kontakte im Spätmittelalter (1450–1520)*, ed. by Jos. M.M. Hermans and Robert Peters (Münster: LIT, 1997) and Jos. M. M. Hermans, *Zwolve boeken voor een markt zonder grenzen 1477–1523* (Utrecht: De Graaf, 2004). Humanist medical doctors are discussed by Catrien Santing, *Geneeskunde en humanisme: Een intellectuele biografie van Theodericus Ulsenius (c. 1460–1508)* (Rotterdam: Erasmus, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> For the schools of the northern Low Countries, see e.g., Regnerus R. Post, *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), and his *Scholen en onderwijs in Nederland gedurende de Middeleeuwen* (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1954).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the first students of our fifteenth- and sixteenth-century scholars were mostly theologians who were especially interested in the religious and theological relationship between the Modern Devotion, Erasmian humanism, and the Reformation.<sup>18</sup> They gave virtually no attention to the *literary style*, the *poetics*, or the *philological skills* of men such as Agricola or Fredericus Moorman (†1482) or Wessel Gansfort. Neither did they say much about their didactical and pedagogical practice. Instead they focused on the way the religious ideas of Luther and Erasmus had been prefigured in the authors of the fifteenth century, especially those linked in some way to the Modern Devotion. This conceit allowed Lindeboom to coin the phrase 'biblical humanism' as a designation for the entire humanist movement of the north of which Erasmus was seen to be the very apex.

Lindeboom's *parti pris* can be discerned clearly in his discussion of Agricola's *De inventione dialectica*. He dismisses it out of hand as 'school logic', and his discussion of Agricola's religious poetry fares no better. Adrie van der Laan has remarked that to Lindeboom's eye and ear its form is elegant, but its contents poor; it bears the mark of a well-read man of good taste and humanist upbringing whose sole purpose is the production of elegant phrases in a Ciceronian style. But

<sup>18</sup> There had been an earlier revival of interest in Agricola, Gansfort, and Regnerus Praedinius (1510–1559) — the three giants of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanism (often designated as 'biblical') emanating from Groningen — in the first half of the nineteenth century. That rereading of their works was done in the circles of a movement called 'Waarheid in Liefde' (Truth in Love) which sought to counter Dutch 'modern theology'. With not a little pride, adherents found 'orthodox' roots in a Netherlandish reformed tradition theologically paralleling Luther's German insights but predating him, which centred on these three men. Even the arts faculty of the university was caught up in this movement, soliciting a prize essay on Agricola to which Tjalling P. Tresling applied with his *Vita et merita Rudolphi Agricolae* (Groningen: [n. pub.], 1830), putting emphasis on Agricola's fine Latin and his theory of stylistics. The same author wrote an article on Praedinius in 1844. Willem Muurling, a church historian also at Groningen, published two studies on Gansfort: 'Commentatio historico-theologica de Wesseli Gansfortii' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Utrecht, 1831) and an *Oratio* on Wessel Gansfort (Amsterdam: Müller, 1840). Two and a half centuries earlier, the founders of the university at Groningen, had traced their spiritual and especially intellectual roots back to the same trio, even commemorating them and engraving their portraits at the head of the gallery of early professors before 1654: *Effigies & vitae Professorum Academiae Groningae & Omlandiae* (Groningen: I. Nicolai, 1654). On the occasion of the inauguration of the new university in 1614, Petrus Pappus à Tratzberg published the works of Gansfort: *Opera* (Groningen: Iohannes Sassijs, 1614; fasc. repr. Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1966), hereby demonstrating this perceived historical continuity. See on this also Vanderjagt, 'Practising Continuity: The Academy at Groningen, 1595–1625, in *Scholarly Environments*, ed. by Alasdair A. MacDonald and Arend H. Huussen (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 33–47.

it has no conviction; it has no real content. Agricola represents the purely formal humanism which fits the poetical spirit of Italy but which was unsuitable for the serious theology and elated piety of the Low Countries.<sup>19</sup> According to Lindeboom, then, Agricola and those around him did more damage than good to the high religious and moral purpose of the biblical humanism that was to lead to Luther, but especially to Erasmus. Neither Lindeboom — an historian of the church — nor scholars of the Modern Devotion, such as his learned student Maarten van Rhijn (1917)<sup>20</sup> or Albert Hyma (1924)<sup>21</sup> and L. W. Spitz (1963),<sup>22</sup> were interested in Latin poetics and literary style. Hence they did not really look for or examine closely the works of the ‘trivial’ humanists associated with Agricola in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

More than half a century after the work by Lindeboom and Hyma and their followers and associates, Josef IJsewijn of Leuven, an astute scholar of Greek, Latin, and Neolatin, not a theologian, stimulated a group of like-minded scholars closely associated with Agostino Sottili in Turin and Fokke Akkerman in Groningen to scour libraries and manuscript collections for works written by Agricola and his correspondents and by the men mentioned by Goswinus van Halen and Erasmus himself as northern humanists of the first line and meticulously to analyse these.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Adrie H. van der Laan, ‘Humanism in the Low Countries before Erasmus: Rodolphus Agricola’s Address to the Clergy at Worms’, in *Antiquity Renewed*, ed. by Zweder R. W. M. von Martels and Victor Schmidt (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), pp. 127–66.

<sup>20</sup> Maarten van Rhijn’s interests ranged widely from the Modern Devotion to Luther and far beyond into theological issues of the twentieth century. In our context, his most important studies are *Wessel Gansfort* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1917) and *Studiën over Wessel Gansfort en zijn tijd* (Utrecht: Kemink, 1933). It should be noted that the American translators of many of Gansfort’s writings, Edward W. Miller and Jared W. Scudder, *Wessel Gansfort: Life and Writings; Principal Works*, 2 vols (New York: Putnam’s, 1917), were not interested in Latin poetics either, but rather in the reformed theological tradition.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance: A History of the ‘Devotio Moderna’* (Grand Rapids: Reformed Press, 1924); the same lack of feeling for Latinity is apparent in his much later study *The Brethren of the Common Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950) and also in his work on Erasmus and Calvin.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis W. Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), a volume of his collected essays and lectures on this topic dating from 1953 onwards.

<sup>23</sup> IJsewijn’s seminal article is ‘The Coming of Humanism to the Low Countries’, in *Itinerarium italicum: The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations; Dedicated to Paul Oskar Kristeller on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. by Heiko

Central to the *studia humanitatis* of the Renaissance is the revival of interest in the languages, literature, and culture of classical antiquity without the mediation of the Middle Ages. This is the movement back to the original 'sources', *ad fontes!* — usually taken as texts, but architecture, sculpture, and painting may also be included — of the Greek and Roman world. Scholarship of the Italian Renaissance has by and large given more attention to the revival of interest in ancient non-Christian texts (such as those of the *Oresteia* or of Plato and Aristotle) than in those of the Christian patristic tradition (such as the works of Augustine, Jerome, or Chrysostom). Scholars of early humanism north of the Alps have tended to concentrate on the renewed study of the Christian texts of antiquity and on the emphasis placed on the importance of the knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin for a clear understanding of the Old and New Testaments. Although the humanist reappraisal of the text of the Bible by skilled and careful readers such as Lorenzo Valla and Erasmus has been widely studied, especially by historians of theology, and in one way or another has been linked to the Reformation, our early northern humanists have until now largely escaped scrutiny on this point. This is easily understood because the enormous achievements in this area by Valla and in particular by Erasmus and Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522) have obscured the diligent work of the latter's forerunners, Gansfort and Agricola. Research in this area is still in its infancy, yet it is becoming clear that next to other humanist interests, these two northerners had a high regard for the *Hebraica veritas* and that they acquired enough Hebrew — a remarkable feat at that time and in this region — to vault over the Latin text of the Vulgate to the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Under their eagle-eyed scrutiny, that text yielded up remarkable new insights not only for their own time but even by twenty-first-century standards.<sup>24</sup>

A. Oberman and Thomas A. Brady, Jr (Leiden: Brill, 1975), pp. 193–301. For Sottili's meticulous archival work with regard to the connections of northern scholars to Italy and for his minute and important observations on their knowledge and practical usage of Latin and Greek, see the essays devoted to him and a full bibliography of his works (compiled by Patrizia S. De Corso) in *Margarita Amicorum: Studi di cultura europea per Agostino Sottili*, ed. by Fabio Forner, Carla M. Monti, and Paul Gerhard Schmidt, 2 vols (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2005). For some of the publications by Akkerman and his colleagues, see n. 4, above, and passim in these footnotes. An invaluable finding list for this humanism is Aloïs Gerlo and Hendrik D. L. Vervliet, *Bibliographie de l'humanisme des anciens Pays-Bas* (Brussels: Presses universitaires de Bruxelles, 1972) and the *Supplément* to this work by Marcus de Schepper and Chris L. Heesakkers (Brussels: Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1988).

<sup>24</sup> Heiko A. Oberman, 'Discovery of Hebrew and Discrimination against the Jews: The Veritas Hebraica as Double-Edged Sword in Renaissance and Reformation', in *Germania*

*Rudolph Agricola's Pedagogical Advice to Hegius and Barbirianus: 'Constant Exercise'*

The central figure of this early northern humanism then is Rudolph Agricola. One of the core issues of the *studia humanitatis*, the humanism of the Renaissance, is, indeed, its understanding of itself as learning and pedagogy, as scholarship received from pagan and Christian antiquity in as pure a language as possible, which is to be put to use in the present and to be transmitted to future generations. In Agricola's view the *studia humanitatis* — or, for him, almost synonymously, philosophy — is not something that is to be pursued only for its own sake. Its three constituent parts — the study of language and discourse (logic or dialectics), the study of the natural world (physics and especially medicine), and the study of morality (ethics and politics) — primarily serve practical purposes. At the close of his oration in praise of philosophy and the other arts, Agricola bolsters his argument by calling on the example given by Cicero in his *Tusculan disputations* of Socrates, who was said to be the first to have called philosophy down from the heavens to dwell in cities among men.<sup>25</sup> Thus philosophy is fundamentally a moral and political discipline, not stargazing. This does not mean, however, that its 'theoretical' and linguistic elements are to be disregarded. It is true that if we were to defer only to necessity, we should pay attention especially to the part of morals 'without which we can impossibly live virtuously'; the other parts of philosophy have more to do with the pleasure they give our spirit than with practical use.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, for Agricola, physics and logical invention are

*Illustrata: Essays on Early Modern Germany Presented to Gerald Strauss*, ed. by Andrew C. Fix and Susan C. Karant-Nunn (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992), pp. 19–34, and his 'Wessel Gansfort: "Magister Contradictionis"', in *Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Northern Humanism* (see n. 4, above), pp. 97–121. For Agricola as a scholar of the Hebrew of the Bible, see Vanderjagt, 'Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Rudolph Agricola (1443?–1485)'; 'Ad fontes! — the Early Humanist Concern for the *Hebraica veritas*', in *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: A History of its Interpretation*, II: *From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, ed. by Magne Sæbø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), pp. 154–89, and 'Mediating the Bible: Three Approaches; The Cases of Giannozzo Manetti (1396–1459), Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Sanctes Pagninus (1470–1536)', in *Cultural Mediators: Artists and Writers at the Crossroads of Tradition, Innovation and Reception in the Low Countries and Italy (1450–1650)*, ed. by Annette de Vries (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), pp. 23–40.

<sup>25</sup> Rudolph Agricola, *In laudem philosophiae, et reliquarum artium Oratio*, in *Rodolphi Agricolae Phrisii Lucubrationes [...]*, ed. by Alardus of Amsterdam (Cologne: Gymnicus, 1539: fasc. repr. Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1967), pp. 144–59; on Socrates, p. 155.

<sup>26</sup> Agricola, *In laudem philosophiae*, p. 155: 'sine qua bene prorsus uiuere nequimus, et reliqua magis ad uoluptatem animi nostri, quam usum pertinere'.

needed as well because without their knowledge and application moral injunctions and prescriptions can neither be demonstrated nor fully understood. These other philosophical arts, moreover, also allow us to remove ourselves from day to day, lower concerns; and they ensure that our desires are not misguided by transitory and imperfect things. The physical art of medicine looks after our corporeal health and the preservation of humankind;<sup>27</sup> and dialectics opens the way to all the other arts.<sup>28</sup> Both together put down a foundation and a road for the virtues, thereby affording the inner man who is devoted to a moral life an easier and more certain access to them. The practice of morality is the set goal of philosophy, but the route towards that dynamic is paved and made accessible by knowledge of the world of real things and by its logical analysis and convincing presentation through Agricola's system of the use of commonplaces.

In the first chapter of Book I of his *De inventione dialectica*, Agricola presents an engaging image of this process. He pictures our spirit as circling around the things of the world about us and then, as it were, zooming in on those aspects which are to constitute in a convincing and suitable way what it is we want to make evident about them.<sup>29</sup> The method of employing commonplaces is useful for evaluating (*conferre*) not only much of human knowledge, but especially political, legal, religious, and pious matters. The prudence of the 'inventor' — if that pun may be used here — is that his method affords him insight into the things under discussion, a judgement on agreements and oppositions between them, and an understanding of where they may lead.<sup>30</sup> The book that follows is a precise examination with many examples and illustrations of the way the method of the topics is to be used.

On its completion in 1479, Agricola dedicated *De inventione dialectica* to his friend Dietrich von Plieningen. In the dedicatory letter, he writes that he understands that he has in that book addressed a branch of scholarship virtually unknown to the general public; besides he has been outspoken in criticizing the authorities in the field, and his work has not been written in a very accessible way.<sup>31</sup> This is, of course, a topos of humility, and one which Agricola frequently

<sup>27</sup> Agricola, *In laudem philosophiae*, p. 153.

<sup>28</sup> Agricola, *In laudem philosophiae*, p. 151.

<sup>29</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, I.1, pp. 10–11: '[loci], quorum admonitu, velut signis quibusdam, circumferremus per ipsas res animum, et quid esset in unaquaque probabile aptumque instituto orationis nostrae, perspiceremus.'

<sup>30</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, I.1, pp. 12–13.

<sup>31</sup> *De inventione dialectica*, pp. 2–3; also in Agricola, *Letters*, no. 18, pp. 110–14.

employs. He continues in the same vein at the end of his long book, where he hopes that he will be believed when he claims that in its writing he has been led not by his own interests but by what may be of use to his reader.<sup>32</sup> In any case, these remarks suggest that Agricola meant his work to be read and applied by an audience larger than only the scholastic teachers of universities. Soon afterwards he was corresponding with Alexander Hegius and Jacobus Barbirianus about educational and pedagogical matters which must be seen as putting into practice the method he had just explained in his book. This becomes especially clear from a letter to Barbirianus in which Agricola discusses the qualities a schoolmaster must have.<sup>33</sup> He must not be an *artista*, that is to say: a theologian or a physician. Such scholars may believe themselves to be suitable for the profession because they think they can hold forth at length about anything, but they suffer from self-delusion. What is necessary for a teacher is to have knowledge of ‘the principles and rules of learning and speaking’. This is precisely the topic of Agricola’s great book.

Before discussing their correspondence, both men need briefly to be introduced. Alexander Hegius (c. 1439–1498) — in the sources also called ‘Master Sander’ or ‘Master van den Heck’ — hailed from Burgsteinfurt.<sup>34</sup> He was taught the trivium probably at the Latin school of the Dom at Münster. To further his studies he attended the university of the Hanseatic city of Rostock far to the north-east on the Warnow River, which runs into the Baltic Sea. The choice for that city was expedited by the fact that Münster, too, belonged to the Hanze, and besides that both cities were closely connected spiritually and intellectually through their houses of the Modern Devotion, which tied them also to the towns of the IJssel Valley. At this oldest university of northern Europe — founded in 1419, but in the time of Hegius barely half a century old — he took the degree of *magister artium*, which would allow him to teach and to become the rector or

<sup>32</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectic*, III.16, pp. 562–63.

<sup>33</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 29, pp. 178–81.

<sup>34</sup> On Hegius, see especially Jan C. Bedaux, ‘Hegius Poeta: Het leven en de Latijnse gedichten van Alexander Hegius’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leiden, 1998); Norbert Schauerte, *Alexander Hegius (ca. 1433–1498): Ein münsterländischer Humanist und Pädagoge in seiner Zeit* (Ahaus: Förderkreis des Alexander-Hegius-Gymnasiums, 1999) and *Met Erasmus naar school / Zur Schule mit Erasmus: Handschriften, boeken en voorwerpen uit de tijd van Alexander Hegius als rector van de Latijnse school in Deventer*, ed. by Jan Bedaux and others (Deventer: Historisch Museum De Waag, 1998) and the bibliographies given in these two works; cf. the remarks and analyses passim in Rudolf Agricola (curs. Letters curs.).

director of important Latin schools. In 1469, Master Sander was appointed headmaster of the Latin school of Wesel and in 1474 rector of the school at Emmerich. It is at Emmerich that he meets Agricola in 1479, as the latter was returning to Groningen from Ferrara, where he had learned Greek.<sup>35</sup> At that time Agricola was again staying at the castle of 's-Heerenbergh as the personal friend and guest of Adam Montensis (= van den Bergh), whom he had come to know well in the early 1470s as a student at Pavia where both were then studying jurisprudence. Hegius and Agricola were probably introduced to each other by Maurice, Count of Spiegelberg, who had become an exile at Emmerich after he had had to flee the onslaught of the Burgundian army on Cologne in 1474. This protector and maecenas of many scholars was particularly fond of Agricola and well acquainted with Hegius, too. The two learned men immediately took to each other with Agricola even abandoning his castellan quarters to stay with Hegius in a very simple little room of the convent of the brothers of the Modern Devotion at Emmerich.

If Hegius is a knowledgeable humanist master of arts with a good pedagogical and didactical way with students, Jacobus Barbirianus (1455–1491) spoke also to Agricola's musical interests.<sup>36</sup> Barbirianus was probably born in Antwerp.<sup>37</sup> He acquired his degree as *magister artium* in the mid-seventies but it is unclear where he studied. Little more is known about him than that he was an outstanding composer. Appointed choirmaster of the cathedral of Our Lady at Antwerp in 1484, he composed religious as well as secular music. Barbirianus's vernacular song 'Een vrolyke wesen' became popular throughout Europe: in Spain, Italy, and England. This and other popular tunes of his were used by the composers Isaac and Obrecht for the *cantus firmi* of some of their masses. Highly regarded at the court of Maximilian I in the northern Burgundian lands, Barbirianus also in 1490

<sup>35</sup> The longstanding debate among scholars on the year of their meeting — 1474/75 or 1479 — has been definitively resolved by Bedaux, 'Hegius Poeta', pp. 18–20.

<sup>36</sup> For Agricola's interest in and practice of music: Fokke Akkerman, 'Agricola als musicus', Program of the Organ Concert in the Martinikerk in Groningen on 28 October 1985, on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the death of Rudolf Agricola (Groningen, 1985), pp. 3–8; Cor H. Edskes, 'Rudolph Agricola and the Organ of the Martinikerk', in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)* (see n. 4, above), pp. 112–17.

<sup>37</sup> On Barbirianus (Barbireau): Elly Kooiman, 'The Biography of Jacob Barbireau (1455–1491) reviewed', *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis*, 38 (1988), 36–58, and 'The Letters of Rodolphus Agricola to Jacobus Barbirianus', in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)*, pp. 136–46; see also Rob C. Wegman's entry 'Barbireau [Barbirianus], Jacobus', in *Grove Music Online*, <www.grovemusic.com> [accessed autumn of 2005].

visited the Hungarian court at Buda as Queen Beatrice's *musicus praestantissimus*. He died soon after his return to Antwerp.

Agricola met Barbirianus at Antwerp in the second half of 1481. He was spending two weeks in that city as part of a six-month sojourn with the court of Maximilian as a legate on a legal matter touching Groningen's mercantile interests.<sup>38</sup> The municipal authorities were so impressed by his scholarship that Agricola was offered a salary of one hundred crowns annually to become a master of a newly to-be-established Latin school there. After much soul-searching he was in the end to turn down this offer in order to take up a professorial post at Heidelberg, closely connected to the court of Johann Kämmerer von Dalberg, Chancellor of the Palatinate and Bishop of Worms, the opportunity of Hebrew studies there forcing his decision.<sup>39</sup> Barbirianus had been instrumental in the Antwerp offer. Apparently, in similar fashion to his first encounter with Hegius, Agricola had immediately been personally greatly taken by the Antwerp musician, as the latter was by him.<sup>40</sup> They made plans about teaching and played music together. When Agricola moved to Heidelberg a few years later, he pleaded with Barbirianus to send him some of his recently composed songs which he intended to give to the Bishop's singers. At the end of the same letter he demands an extensive report on all of Barbirianus's doings by way of the servant who has brought it to him from Antwerp. Agricola had wanted to teach Barbirianus because he saw in him the possibility of intellectual growth which would surpass his own knowledge; and Barbirianus, too, desired Agricola as his teacher. Almost as soon as Agricola had returned to Groningen from Antwerp he is already despairing that Barbirianus has forgotten him, and he writes him that after leaving him his Muses have fallen completely silent; he no longer sings or plays instruments, and: 'I sometimes think I have lost myself.'<sup>41</sup> By the autumn of 1482 Agricola writes Barbirianus that he has decided to accept the Heidelberg position regardless of the

<sup>38</sup> Agricola waxes eloquent on the learning of members of Maximilian's court and on the Duke's hospitality; Agricola's scholarship was so highly regarded that Maximilian offered him the posts of tutor to his children and of secretary for his Latin correspondence, an offer our humanist turned down although financially it would have been highly rewarding. On all of this: Agricola, *Letters*, nos 23 and 26, pp. 142–47; 152–59. On Agricola as a Groningen diplomat see Folkert J. Bakker, 'Roeloff Huusman, Secretarius der Stadt Groningen 1479/80–1484', in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)* (see n. 4, above), pp. 99–111.

<sup>39</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 28, pp. 166–67.

<sup>40</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 24, pp. 146–51.

<sup>41</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 24, pp. 150–51.

latter's efforts on his behalf at Antwerp. But it is clear from this letter and from what Agricola says in it about the four missives which he has meanwhile received from Barbirianus how intimate their friendship remains.<sup>42</sup> Once settled in Heidelberg, Agricola writes Barbirianus a letter of advice on a suitable programme of studies as a kind of consolation prize. This is the famous letter published later as a small educational treatise entitled *De formando studio*.<sup>43</sup>

The correspondence between Agricola and these two men, as also that with others such as Dietrich von Plieningen or Adolf Occo, the East Frisian doctor, demonstrates that for him highly personal even emotional friendship was a necessary element of his humanist learning and its communication.<sup>44</sup> A fine example of this highly personal and emotional aspect of Agricola's learning is found in a letter to Hegius, written to him from Groningen in September, 1480.<sup>45</sup> Hegius had apparently gone up to Groningen to visit him, but Agricola had been away. He writes how saddened and upset he was to learn that they had missed each other. He needs a kindred spirit with whom to study:

I lack someone to supervise [my studies], a companion to share things with, someone in whose ears I can deposit things while he in turn deposits in mine anything he has thought up, put in writing, learnt by reading, or anything he thinks deserves some praise or a keen opinion.

He misses 'someone who is able and willing to speak and to hear the truth', the very 'fruit of friendship'. Hegius has such qualities and Agricola would prefer to live with him, but all that is possible is to come together only once in a while — perhaps Agricola is thinking of the circles at Aduard and 's-Heerenbergh. They must therefore be content with writing letters. Without this companionship Agricola fears that he is already losing his ability to express himself appropriately, fully and elegantly; he is no longer writing poetry, and his knowledge of history is rapidly failing. From all of this it is clear how important affective, intelligent discourse was for Agricola. This is mirrored theoretically in the analysis

<sup>42</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 29, pp. 166–81.

<sup>43</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 38, pp. 200–19. It is often printed together with similar works by Erasmus and Melanchthon: see Huisman, *Bibliography*.

<sup>44</sup> On the importance of intelligent and cultured discussion and society to many of the astute minds of the later Middle Ages: Andrea A. Robiglio, 'Between Language and Likemindedness: Some Aspects of the Concept of *conversatio civilis* from Aquinas to Guazzo', in *Language and Cultural Change: Aspects of the Study and Use of Language in the Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Lodi Nauta (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), pp. 113–31 (p. 129).

<sup>45</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 21, pp. 122–29.

of persuasive communication which he gives in *De inventione dialectica*. Here he not only analyses formal argumentation and the way it is structured but he also underscores the way in which to make knowledge in this form affectively appealing to his readership and audience.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, there is a very personal colour to his formal exposition of what the passions are and what their origin is.<sup>47</sup>

Three years after he had in that long book given a theoretical version of those necessary ‘principles and rules of learning and speaking’, Agricola had in 1482 written Barbirianus what he believed was required of a good schoolmaster. Now, in 1485, he is prepared to expand on them more practically in his *De formando studio*. Before he approaches the principles of scholarship and its communication, Agricola argues that our learning has two general aspects: that of actions and morals, which is the more important part of philosophy, and that of the things which give us pleasure and adorn our minds.<sup>48</sup> The first teaches us how to live our lives correctly and appropriately; the second takes us up into a philosophical discussion about the nature of things. For the moral part he recommends not only philosophers such as Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca, but also historians, poets, and orators, provided they write in Latin — by which he means classical Latin — or have been translated into good Latin. This addition on Latinity shows how much store Agricola set by the style in which moral insight is communicated, something which informs much of *De inventione dialectica*. Of course, the ultimate moral precepts are to be found in Scripture, which ‘alone leads us along a safe, firm and straight path’. For the nature of things Agricola points to complex and varied discussions by learned and eloquent scholars; perhaps he is being ironic here about contemporary scholastic discussions about metaphysics and ontology. He rather recommends an examination of the things themselves, by which he does not mean essences, but ‘the geography and nature of lands, seas, mountains and rivers; the customs, borders and circumstances of nations that live on earth; the empires in their historical and extended forms; you have now got to look into the medicinal properties of trees and herbs, a subject Theophrastus wrote about; you have now got to look into the history, reproduction and anatomy of living creatures, a subject Aristotle wrote about’.

<sup>46</sup> See Ann Moss, *Renaissance Truth*, pp. 119–20; pp. 165–67.

<sup>47</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, III.1, pp. 434–39; for a French translation, see Agricola, *Écrits sur la dialectique*, pp. 222–28.

<sup>48</sup> Similar points had already been made in his Ferrara oration on philosophy and the arts; see above, pp. 202–03.

Agricola's emphasis on the things themselves in this letter to Barbirianus and on the 'art' of medicine as the most important part of physics as outlined in the *Oratio* in which he praises philosophy might lead us to believe that his approach to knowledge and learning runs in the same vein as that of Niccolò Leonicino (1428–1524). Leonicino, from 1464 onwards, taught first mathematics and then moral philosophy and medicine at the University of Ferrara. Agricola's oration, of course, opened the academic year at Ferrara in 1476, and he must have known Leonicino. Like the latter, Agricola was highly interested in classical texts about the natural world such as those of Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Pliny the Elder, and in the practice of medicine.<sup>49</sup> He was dead by the time of the famous Leonicino-Collenuccio debate which broke out in 1492, in which the authority of Pliny's opinions on natural things was at stake. Had Pliny himself made mistakes in his observations and descriptions or had these mistakes entered into his work through the errors and ignorance of scribes down through the centuries? Regardless their differences, Leonicino and Collenuccio both agreed 'that the only way of determining whether Pliny was right was observation: to collect the plants that he described and compare them with his and others' descriptions'.<sup>50</sup> Agricola would have agreed with both scholars that a dependable text had to be established of the ancient texts were they to be of use to scholars. But there is

<sup>49</sup> Agricola also had a keen interest in Pliny the Younger; his philological work on the latter is thoroughly discussed by Franz Römer, 'Agricolae Arbeit am Text des Tacitus und des jüngeren Plinius', in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)* (see n. 4, above), pp. 158–69; on Agricola's ownership of printed works of both Plinys (1476 and 1471), see Jos. M. M. Hermans, 'Rudolph Agricola and his Books, with Some Remarks on the Scriptorium of Selwerd', *ibid.*, pp. 123–35 (pp. 126–28). Gerard Geldenhouwer, a near contemporary of Agricola, remarks in his life of Agricola that the latter was so enamoured of Pliny's *Historia naturalis* that he always had it in his lap ('Plinii naturalem historiam numquam e sinu deponerat') together with Pliny the Younger's letters. Pliny's *Historia naturalis* immediately on its printing became a European hit: even the Burgundian chancellor, Guillaume Hugonet († 1477), owned a copy (printed at Venice in 1469); see Vanderjagt, 'Guillaume Hugonet's Farewell Letter to Louise de Layé on April 3, 1477: "My fortune is such that I expect to die today and to depart this world"', *Fifteenth-Century Studies*, 32 (2007), 176–90. Another mutual favourite was of a more literary sort: Leonicino was a translator of Lucian's work into Italian, while Agricola was the first northerner to translate him into Latin — the *Gallus* — soon to be followed by Reuchlin (a dialogue of Lucian's had, of course, been translated into French in the middle of the fifteenth century at the Burgundian court and into German a bit later by Niclas von Wyle). Agricola made his translation at Ferrara in 1479.

<sup>50</sup> For this quotation and a short discussion, see the marvellous study by Brian W. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 30–32.

nothing in his work that suggests that he would have joined them on a naturalist's expedition.

On the other hand, through Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* runs the same thread as that in Leonicensio's book on Galen.<sup>51</sup> Both consider that the heart of scholarly and scientific production or invention is an 'artistic' construction of theorems — or loci and topoi in propositional forms — leading to an end which shall be reached, or reached easier by, their use. Agricola believes that the loci that are central to these theorems are to be found in the unadulterated usage of the best authors of classical learning.<sup>52</sup>

These common headings, just as they contain within themselves everything that can be said about any subject, so also they contain all the arguments; for this reason they are called topics, because in them are placed, as if in a refuge or a sort of treasury, all instruments for causing belief. Therefore a topic is nothing other than a certain common mark of a thing by whose prompting whatever may be believable about a given thing can be found.<sup>53</sup>

In order for this entire scheme to work it is necessary to make very clear the connection between common headings and the descriptions of the real things in which one is interested. The signs denoting real things must be unambiguous if the system of loci is to function well. Hence descriptive language is to be pure and true with regard to the things it describes. For Agricola words can indeed be, as Marcia Colish phrases it above, 'accurate signs of the things they signify' if care is taken about the way they are understood and used. The classical languages are a favourite for Agricola, but he is clear that the vernacular, too, can be the medium of these signs. In fact, he writes Barbirianus that it is best to shape what you have to say 'as fully and correctly as possible inside your head in your mother tongue, and then to put it down in a Latin that clearly and correctly says exactly the same'.<sup>54</sup> Mistakes, of various sorts, in statements imparting knowledge can 'be picked up quickest in the language that one knows best', that is, in this case, the vernacular. Thus for Agricola it is not Latinity for its own sake that is necessary for any kind of knowledge, but the way in which linguistic signs, whether Latin or vernacular, relate to the things they signify. He does not doubt that words can

<sup>51</sup> For Leonicensio's *De tribus doctrinis ordinatis secundum Galeni sententiam*, see Eckhardt Kessler, 'Renaissance Humanism: The Rhetorical Turn', *Brill's Studies in Intellectual History*, 143 (2006), 181–98.

<sup>52</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, 1.2, pp. 20–21.

<sup>53</sup> For this translation see, Mack, *Renaissance Argument*, p. 140.

<sup>54</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 38, pp. 208–09.

signify accurately. Mistakes in thinking occur when these signs are incorrectly ordered under the appropriate topics and when the rules of logic are neglected in the process of invention. At almost every turn in his works and letters, it is evident that Agricola, like his fellow humanists, revelled in words.<sup>55</sup>

The strong emphasis that Agricola puts on the loci as, so to speak, the fathers of invention and the very beginning of knowledge explains his insistence on the use of pure Latin and Greek, and by extension also of Hebrew. This last theme runs through his entire correspondence and especially in his letters to his friend Hegius, whom he teaches a thing or two about Latin usage.<sup>56</sup> Soon after their first meeting in the 's-Heerenberg circle of humanists, Hegius in 1483 had been appointed to head the Latin school at Deventer.<sup>57</sup> Hegius was not much of a renewer and at his school the trivium was taught rather traditionally from Petrus Hispanus's *Summulae logicales*.<sup>58</sup> But under Agricola's influence Hegius probably

<sup>55</sup> Moss, *Renaissance Truth*, has at length discussed the significance of words — rather than syntax — in renaissance linguistics; but see also her 'Language Can Change Minds', in *Language and Cultural Change* (see n. 44, above), pp. 187–203.

<sup>56</sup> Their correspondence overflows with Hegius's questions about the meaning of many Latin words and their correct usage and Agricola's precise, considered discussion of them. A case in point is Agricola, *Letters*, no. 21, written on 20 September 1480 from Groningen; in it he discusses the difference (putting Greek into the equation as well) between *mimus*, *histrio*, and *persona*, he continues with *scurra*, *nebulo*, *homo*, and *anthropos*, *vesper*, with a jibe at Valla and a reference to Cicero: *Socratitas*, *Platonitas* and *entitas*, *tignum*, *dioceses*, *quanto tempore*; at the end of the letter Agricola sums up with a small discussion on Hegius's specific style in his questioning of him.

<sup>57</sup> Under Hegius, the Latin school flourished as never before and its teaching would become influential in the Low Countries and Germany. Its most famous student, of course, was Erasmus, but he can hardly be called a schoolmaster or professor. Well-known educators who were taught there are the local schoolmasters Jacobus Faber of Deventer (1473–1517) and Johannes of Venray (1541–1626), Hermannus Torrentius (c. 1450–1520), and Gerardus Listrius (active 1506–22), both of Zwolle, Johannes Murmellius (c. 1479–1517), who taught at Zwolle, Deventer, Münster, and Alkmaar, Hermannus Buschius (1468–1534), a poet and professor at Wittenberg, Leipzig, and Cologne, Gerardus Geldenhauer (1482–1542) at Marburg, Conradus Goclenius (†1539) at Leuven, and Ortwinus Gratius (1480–1542) at Cologne. Another pupil of the school was the humanist traveller Johannes Butzbach (1477–1516), later a monk of the abbey of Maria Laach in the Eifel region, who gives a full account of Hegius and the Deventer school in his *Odeporicon*; both he and Erasmus date the decline of the school from Hegius's death in 1498: Johannes Butzbach, *Odeporicon: Eine Autobiographie aus dem Jahre 1506*, ed. by Andreas Beriger (Weinheim: Acta Humaniora, 1991), pp. 284–97. On all of this see also *Met Erasmus naar school*, pp. 14–15.

<sup>58</sup> Ad A. M. de Haan, 'Geschiedenis van het wijsgerig onderwijs te Deventer', in *Deventer Denkers: De geschiedenis van het wijsgerig onderwijs te Deventer*, ed. by Hans W. Blom, Henri

treated only the treaties I–V and VII, that is to say, those sections which discuss matters most closely related to the latter's loci and their implementation: the terms and their traits, syllogisms, invention, sophismata. Thus Hegius introduced his pupils — among them later movers and shakers such as Murmellius, Listrius, and Erasmus — to the first principles of what has been called the rhetorical turn of humanism.<sup>59</sup> It was not until the second half of the sixteenth century that Agricola's *Inventio* was being used at Deventer and then only in the summary by Latomus. In all of this, Agricola insists time and again on taking care that the classical texts used for teaching and imparting knowledge generally be written in the clearest and most unadulterated Latin.

The precision on which Agricola continually insists is directly related to his ideal of education. It is not enough to get the mere gist of the matter that is under examination.<sup>60</sup> We must be completely clear about it and also 'perceive the significance of the words as they are used by skilful authors, their proper meaning and rhetorical arrangement, what the beauty, what the strength is of the statements, how great the power of explaining hidden matters and putting them into words, dragging them into the light before our eyes, as it were'. Implicit in this is the trivium: knowledge of grammar, putting observations into statements and conclusions, that is, dialectics; and presenting the results clearly, or waxing eloquent. Agricola full well understands how difficult all of this is and he offers Barbirianus the advice that 'to progress, you need assiduity, not indignation' with regard to what is at first unclear. Gloss over what you don't understand, and 'take a look at it another time, after we have got hold of a person or a book that can enlighten us, or (what often happens) until we read elsewhere something that throws light on it. I always say that one day teaches another'. He says this not to encourage laziness but from his experience that 'every obstacle encountered during reading is overcome by reading'. Hence his injunction that a clear and unambiguous grip on knowledge requires attentive reading of the best texts in the clearest language; a trained memory is necessary for retaining this knowledge; and finally, the ability to create and produce from this knowledge something the scholar can call his own

A. Krop, and Michel R. Wielema (Hilversum: Verloren, 1993), pp. 29–122. De Haan, pp. 32–33, points out that Petrus Hispanus was printed at Deventer at least nineteen times between 1489 and 1518, thus demonstrating its continuing popularity among teachers. What at least one student thought about this is clear from Erasmus's sharp words about his own 'trivial' schooling, although he praises Hegius highly for his Latin and for teaching him Greek.

<sup>59</sup> See Kessler, 'Renaissance Humanism'.

<sup>60</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 38, pp. 210–13.

demands 'constant exercise'.<sup>61</sup> It is this constant exercise in which Agricola is himself engaged in all his writings.

Hard as this all is, the mind with an application of will can reach these heights. In the end, this certainty leads Agricola to exclaim — and here I quote him from the final chapter of *De inventione dialectica* in his enthusiastic Latin — 'Ingens enim, immensa, incredibilis est vis mentis humanae, et cui nihil propemodum difficile est, nisi quod non vult.'<sup>62</sup> Thus for Agricola the mind is incredibly potent; intellectual activity comes to a halt not through the mind but it is the will that is often a drag on the mind. Hence one of the goals of education and pedagogy is to train the will to keep pace with and to stimulate the mind.

In the correspondence with Hegius and Barbirianus there is nothing to suggest that Agricola believes that the sense data of the things themselves — calling to mind his eloquent remarks in his letter *De formando studio* to Barbirianus<sup>63</sup> — connected 'authentically to a knowledge of prior and nonsensible realities', in the way of Marcia Colish's Augustine, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante Alighieri. But Henk Braakhuis has pointed out that Agricola wrote a little treatise *De universalibus*, in which he treats the status of universals and their relation to individual concepts and things.<sup>64</sup> In it Agricola is clear that he accepts the reality of universals outside the mind. This does not mean, however, that he undercuts the position of the real things, the *res ipsae* in his theory of invention. 'One might conclude that for Agricola in last resort the *loci* are not only based on the real things and their universal natures, but that they must also be derived from these.'<sup>65</sup>

This, then, brings us back to the beginning of this essay and my remark that Marcia Colish's characterization of the thought of her four great medieval heroes also holds for my favourite here: Rudolph Agricola at the end of the fifteenth century. It has been pointed out above that Lindeboom in his discussion of Agricola remands him to a cold, nonreligious formalism. Nothing could be further

<sup>61</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 38, pp. 210–11.

<sup>62</sup> Agricola, *De inventione dialectica*, III.16, pp. 560–61: 'For the power of the human mind is enormous, vast, beyond belief! And virtually nothing is difficult for it except that what it does not want to do.' To demonstrate the powers of the human mind and will, Agricola gives the examples of the blind who are able to find their way around a city and the organist whose hands and feet can join together by the power of the mind to bring forth music *à l'improviste*.

<sup>63</sup> See above, pp. 207–08.

<sup>64</sup> Henk A. G. Braakhuis, 'Agricola's View on Universals', in *Rodolphus Agricola Phrisius (1444–1485)* (see n. 4, above), pp. 239–47.

<sup>65</sup> Braakhuis, 'Agricola's View on Universals', p. 247.

from the truth. Even a superficial reading of his works demonstrates, as Adrie van der Laan and Fokke Akkerman have succinctly and clearly shown, that the first and foremost influence on Agricola from late antiquity came from the writings of the Christian authors. They note, too, that although faith and religion are all but absent from Agricola's correspondence, he does explicitly make the *studia humanitatis* subservient to the study of the *sacrae litterae*.<sup>66</sup> It is exactly in this context that Agricola's desire to learn Hebrew must be seen. He writes Hegius from Worms in January of 1485 that he finds the study of Hebrew very difficult and that he fears that through this effort he is falling behind in keeping up his Latin and Greek.<sup>67</sup> But he does not regret his decision because this means that he can finally study Holy Writ without Latinate and scholastic accretions. More importantly, Agricola's study of Hebrew was closely connected to his desire to read the book of Psalms in their original, unadulterated language. In fact, it was rumoured that he made a new translation into Latin of that book; if this is true, it has not survived. However this may be, this alone is enough to demonstrate a connection to Marcia Colish's first point in the description of the thought of Augustine and his heirs: namely, the central role of Christ the Word as the mediator of religious knowledge. The book of Psalms was regarded by Agricola as well as by many medieval and early modern writers as the authentic voice of Christ in the Old Testament. It is not by accident that the last letter which Reuchlin sent to him but which Agricola never answered asked his philological advice about the names of YHWH and Yehoshua — which is to say in fifteenth-century terms: Jesus — with regard to Psalm 54.<sup>68</sup> This letter also shows that Agricola must have made great progress in the study of Hebrew.

Even though he is engrossed almost entirely in this new subject, Agricola can not refrain even in the very last sentence of the last letter to Hegius which has come down to us from him to make points of Latin and Greek style:

Written very hastily in Worms 'on the third day of the week' [the Latin gives 'tertia septimanae', AV]. This is the way I decided to name what we call in barbaric Latin *feria secunda*, *feria tertia* ('the second weekday', 'the third weekday'), or according to our national language [Agricola here uses the Greek *ethnikooteroos*], 'Monday', 'Thursday', 'Tuesday', 'Wednesday', and so on.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, Introduction, p. 21.

<sup>67</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 43, pp. 234–39.

<sup>68</sup> On the issue of Agricola's Hebrew see my 'Wessel Gansfort (1419–1489) and Rudolph Agricola (1443?–1485)' and cf. 'Ad fontes! The Early Humanist Concern for the *Hebraica veritas*'.

<sup>69</sup> Agricola, *Letters*, no. 43, pp. 238–39.

Again, Agricola is calling the days of the week by what he considers classical Latin usage. At the same time he is dispensing with the heathen, Germanic names — for he uses 'ethnikooteroos' in the New Testament *koiné* sense — for the days of the week. Thus Agricola, under the guise of correcting common usage — whether 'barbaric' or 'national' — is making a religious point, which exactly fits in with the moral education he himself means to glean from reading the Old Testament.



## THE *TIMAEUS LATINUS* AND CUSANUS

Nancy Van Deusen

It is by now a commonplace that Plato's *Timaeus*, in its fifth-century partial Latin translation, was important and influential in the Middle Ages, presenting an arsenal of conceptual tools with which to access and deal with the most basic principles regarding material substance, composition — that is, life itself — and providing a vocabulary of Latin terms for approaching these basic concepts. The *Timaeus latinus* also served as a platform from which to begin further discussion concerning these issues and words, so ubiquitous was its influence. Raymond Klibansky, in his influential *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition: Plato's 'Parmenides' in the Middle Ages*, first published in 1939, reprinted in 1982 and 1984, within the context of his discussion of the mid-twelfth-century translations of Plato's *Meno* and *Phaedo*, writes:

The importance of these works, however, cannot be compared with that of the *Timaeus*. This dialogue, or rather its first part, was studied and quoted throughout the Middle Ages, and there was hardly a mediaeval library of any standing which had not a copy of Chalcidius' version and sometimes also a copy of the fragment translated by Cicero. Although these facts are well known, their significance for the history of ideas has perhaps not been sufficiently grasped by historians.

Klibansky goes on to make the further point that the 'bearing of the literature connected with the mediaeval Plato on the development of Latin philosophical terminology has not yet [...] been properly investigated'.<sup>1</sup> Klibansky's statement is even more accurate for an assessment of music writing within the discipline of music throughout the Middle Ages. It should be mentioned in this context that the copy that was believed to be the oldest extant manuscript of the *Timaeus*

<sup>1</sup> Raymond Klibansky, *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition: Plato's 'Parmenides' in the Middle Ages* (London: Kraus, 1939; repr. 1982, 1984), p. 28.

*latinus* was that of the Carolingian monk Hucbald of St-Amand, who also wrote at least one treatise on music, and even in the twelfth century continued to enjoy a reputation for having served as a consultant for the establishment of *scholae cantorum* — singschools that were always attached to schools that also enjoyed reputations as centres of medieval learning, as, apparently, the cathedral school at Nevers in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.<sup>2</sup> The link between the *Timaeus* and utterly basic music conceptualizations with attendant vocabulary has not, in view of its importance, come under investigation. Obviously, this hiatus should be addressed.

But not only Hucbald of St-Amand owned, read, and apparently prized the *Timaeus latinus*, but, on the other side of what medievalists consider to be the Middle Ages, that is the fifteenth century, it is also well known that Nicolas of Cusa owned the *Timaeus latinus*, now in the British Library as manuscript Harley 2652. This contribution to the festschrift of a scholar whose work spans the entire period under consideration, namely, Marcia L. Colish, will point to a specific term in the *Timaeus*, its translation within, and the ensuing commentary upon, this term, following then the influence of this term upon Cusanus himself. We will also meanwhile observe the usefulness and functionality of the material and measurement discipline of music as it goes about its task of exemplifying this important concept, based within materiality, but leading eventually to the knowledge and description of the unseen, the unknowable — as Cusanus stated — the inexpressible and mysterious things and substance of the triune God.<sup>3</sup>

The Latin *Timaeus* delineated not only how one should think about material, but how to recognize it. And here we have as well an example of the power of translation itself, the influence of the choice of concept on the part of the translator, and, further, a clear example of the translational process in that the translator also infuses terms with what he himself knows, believes he knows, and believes to be true. The translation itself, in addition to providing, case by case, metaphors for terms (*translatio* most commonly signified metaphor), constitutes a *composite* — a composition — on the part of the translator. Chalcidius, in his fifth-century CE translation of one important Greek term into Latin profoundly shaped not only the discipline of music throughout the Middle Ages, as well as

<sup>2</sup> See Nancy Van Deusen, *Music at Nevers Cathedral: Principal Sources of Medieval Chant*, 2 vols (Binningen: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 1980), for an impression of the manuscripts and milieu of this episcopal centre.

<sup>3</sup> Marcia Colish's interest in, and sophisticated appreciation of, music are well known, an additional reason for the topic of this contribution to a volume honouring her work and career.

ways in which music was taught, but medieval perceptions of the compositional process itself, and how one went about in dealing with unseen material, namely, the invisible material of sound.

Terms translated into Latin within the *Timaeus latinus* were of exceptional importance, since, as Klibansky has observed, the *Timaeus* was accessible to nearly everyone who both desired, and had the capacity, to read it throughout the Middle Ages. Nearly every major medieval library held at least one copy of the Latin translation of the *Timaeus* by Chalcidius, frequently also with the commentary by this translator. Thus, we have here an important indication of an aspect of a 'medieval mentality', since, as has also been often noted, they all read the same books. One of these books, certainly, was the *Timaeus latinus*, so it would behoove us to take it seriously. Even Marsilio Ficino, many centuries later, departed little from the Latin text Chalcidius had translated.

How did the *Timaeus latinus* differ conceptually from the available Greek text; what did its readership make of the Latin translation, and what priorities left their traces in discernible ways upon Latin-reading culture throughout the Middle Ages? How did the Latin *Timaeus* depart, as well, from a pre-Socratic, as well as a Platonic, tradition, and what difference did this make specifically for latinized medieval culture? Finally, specifically, how did the *Timaeus latinus* influence Cusanus, and how did this great writer and theologian incorporate the influence of Chalcidius's Latin text and commentary into his own thinking and writing? These are comprehensive questions that are not easily answered, especially in a circumscribed, by necessity, delimited study, but by selecting one important issue to be found in the *Timaeus latinus*, we may be able to make some progress, and at least provide a platform for further discussion, particularly of the issue of the reception and influence of the *Timaeus latinus*.

The primary consideration of the *Timaeus* is, broadly delineated, material, *materia-substantia*, and it is just this subject matter upon which both its Greek and Latin readers, such as, or perhaps especially, Cicero, were divided. The topic of material reality, a priority of both Plato and Aristotle, especially in the *Physica*, and even more so in the subsequent transformation of Plato's text by Chalcidius, focuses in the Greek language on the significance and comprehensiveness of the term *hyle*.

*Hyle* then is a point of departure for Chalcidius as the Greek term for what there is that exists, being, or, perhaps also, interpreted as 'stuff'. The term has, without a doubt, generated much discussion and controversy, then as now. I have noticed that it is a particular sore point and issue between those who primarily study and translate the Greek text, dealing with a philosophical tradition within

the Greek language, and those who deal primarily with the Latin translations of Plato as well as Aristotle, the vocabulary they contain and their influence in the Middle Ages — in other words, a decisive division between Greek scholars and medievalists who study the Latin transmission of seminal texts by Plato and Aristotle and their repercussions within medieval Latin intellectual culture. Both groups most decidedly do not see eye to eye.

Chalcidius, as translator, selects from multiple meanings contained within this concept, pointing it in a specific direction, which he then defends as his contribution to a long-standing discussion. *Hyle*, for Chalcidius, is *chaos*,<sup>4</sup> but he does not refer particularly or exclusively to disorderly ‘stuff’ that can be seen, heard, noticed, described, and moulded in some way, but he rather draws attention to invisible, yet substantial, material, *materia*. In his remarks, particularly concerning this elusive Greek term, Chalcidius seems to have pragmatically avoided certain overwhelming, probably irreconcilable, issues and, quite simply, notes that he took the term and translated it, necessarily, as he states, into a perfectly useable and ordinary Latin expression, ‘*silva*: Necessitatem porro nunc appellat hylen, quam nos Latine silvam possumus nominare’;<sup>5</sup> and again, ‘*chaos*, quam Graeci hylen, nos silvam vocamus’<sup>6</sup> (*silva*, necessarily now called *hyle*, which we Latins are able to name *silva*, and *chaos*, the Greek *hyle*, we call *silva*).

This seems like an apparently innocuous undertaking, supported, as Chalcidius states, by Pythagoras — to which Numenius agreed — leave alone for the moment the side issue that it would seem that Pythagoras wrote, after all, if at all, in Greek, not Latin, and the attendant, more complicated, issue that what has come down as typically ‘Pythagorean’ seems to contradict what Chalcidius was to assert concerning *silva* — and yet the implications of what, in some sense, is a translational slight of hand are amazing. The implications of *silva*, at the same time, appear to be contradictory of one of the basic theses of the Greek *Timaeus*, that is, that what is seen has ascendancy over what is invisible, yet present, as *sound*. In some ways a typical Greek expression that had been used to imply almost everything, and at the same time delivering almost nothing to hold securely in one’s grasp, is consciously channelled by Chalcidius into an ordinary Latin word

<sup>4</sup> See *Timaeus: A Calcidio translatus commentarioque instructus*, ed. by J. H. Waszink, *Plato latinus*, 4, ed. by Raymond Klibansky (Leiden: Brill, 1975), pp. 61.6, 145.4, 259.5, 286.14, 325.22 (all citations of this text refer to this edition).

<sup>5</sup> *Timaeus*, p. 273.15–16.

<sup>6</sup> *Timaeus*, p. 167.6, to be expanded on in the more extended section of Chalcidius’s commentary, chaps 268–354.

meaning, as well as bringing to the Latin mind, a 'forest full of trees'. In a sense, a demystification process has taken place by this *translatio* — literally a metaphoric mutation and manipulation — a transformation of one expression into the connotations of another.

Furthermore, *hyle* is made concrete in that it is accessible to the inner eye, the imagination, when translated into the Latin *silva*. One might also at this point observe that this translation-metaphor of an already transliterated *hyle* was, after all, unnecessary, since the Latin language was already, by the time of Chalcidius's writing, full of Greek terms — words that had landed, been appropriated, or which constituted linguistic cop-outs for Latin writers. The treasure of Greek conceptual terminology had long since been plundered by writers in Latin searching for words. Chalcidius could have followed suit. He does not, and he proceeds to devote the major portion of his commentary that follows to explain himself, thus indicating that the transformation he had effected was not as matter-of-fact as it might on the surface seem, and that, at the very least, he felt compelled to defend himself.

*Silva* was, literally, for the Latin imagination a forest full of trees. *Silva* constituted a rich source of material that could be grown up from seeds, cut down and appropriated, carved into individual recognizable figures, and made into furniture, shaped, formed, piled up, and burnt up into heat and light. And at the end of the century of its lifetime, depending upon its innate properties, at least part of the trees would die and fall to the ground, enriching the soil, and providing yet another kind of *materia-substantia*. Chalcidius's translational metaphor transformed the abstract Greek concept, *hyle*, into one that could be directed to very specific uses, channelling a term into everyday, matter-of-fact perception, and as noted, making it visible to the imagination.

*Silva*, unbounded, without limitation, a dark, even opaque, disorderly thicket, a maze, an intense, compact texture, full of potentially useful material, invited those who knew of its existence and who could work with its material properties, to enter and help themselves — and, of course, forests existed all over medieval and even so-called 'early modern' Europe to serve as literal and concrete examples of exactly what Chalcidius projected.<sup>7</sup> Fernand Braudel, in his *Identity of France*,

<sup>7</sup> Fernand Braudel states that the forests of medieval France well into the seventeenth century were just such forests, full of material and possibilities for lodging, some of which were simply available for those who otherwise had neither income nor place to live: the homeless or fugitives. See *The Identity of France*, trans. by Sian Reynolds, 2 vols (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), I, 55; I, 146–53, with subtitles: 'The Forest: Jewel among Properties', 'The Forest: A World Upside Down', and 'The Forest as Refuge'. Collections of 'folktales' such as those of the Grimm brothers

writes in a chapter entitled 'The Forest, Jewel among Properties', with a subtitle, 'The Forest as Refuge', makes the point that 'these silent, dark, forests with their piled up logs' were limitless in that they often reached over county — even country — boundaries, and there were few paths and roads. The possibilities, then, for differentiation into characteristic *figurae* or *differentiae* as twigs and branches from the larger disorderly mass, were endless. The concept of *silva*, therefore, contained within itself the possibility of differentiation, made clear by indicators — all of which, patently and ultimately real — a reality that extended, as well to the reality within the imagination.<sup>8</sup> In other words, *silva* itself is disorderly, uncontained, and indeterminate, but can be carefully, selectively, differentiated into *modi*, or classifiable, differing *motions*, manners, or ways of movement. One question that comes to mind is how, in fact, did Chalcidius come to, and settle upon, this particular word in the Latin language. That Chalcidius, indeed, selected *silva*, with its obvious material connotations, illustrates what occurs in the translational process here, namely, that Chalcidius appropriated from many sources — certainly also the discussion of material and its properties from Aristotle's *Physica*<sup>9</sup> — all of the aspects of material property he could think of, and loaded them, so to speak, into *silva*. In a sense, then, *silva* as a word itself, is an example of what the word signifies, namely, an entire *thicket* of aspects, concepts, permutations, and threads, a pre-existent conceptual *stuff* from which

began often with a line such as 'Near a large forest lived a poor woodcutter with his wife and two children'. See Eugen Weber's 'What is Real in Folk Tales', in *My France: Politics, Culture, Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1991), pp. 75–76. The concrete exemplification of this concept of *silva* as a disorderly limitless mass of material that could be accessed and was available would have been available to a Latin readership even much later than the Middle Ages, a point to be reinforced below. In a sense, collections of folktales themselves comprised a *silva* — a rich material resource — to be appropriated, changed, transformed.

<sup>8</sup> See Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), who writes of imaginative 'tools', regarding them primarily as rhetorical. But there is also a fundamental material aspect at stake here, namely, the materiality of concepts, for example, of *cento* (a 'chunk' of material, both textual as well as conceptual, translated, as well into the Latin *punctum*), or *figura* (a delineation within a chunk (*cento*) of material; one of the translations of the Greek *schema*). One must consider the totality of medieval education which included the material and measurement disciplines, giving substance to what was then exemplified by rhetorical *figurae*.

<sup>9</sup> See also the *Metaphysica*, I.3.983b. An earlier study of this concept can be found in van Deusen, 'The Problem of Matter, the Nature of Mode, and the Example of Melody in Medieval Music Writing', in *The Harp and the Soul: Essays in Medieval Music*, Studies in the History and Interpretation of Music, 3 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1989), pp. 1–45.

one could take out and select what was useful to one's own purposes. Chalcidius's *silva*, as a term, itself is a collection and composition, a *composite* from many different sources that were available to him at that time.

If this were not the case, Chalcidius would not have taken such pains to explain himself. The passages on the subject of *silva* constitute, as J. C. M. van Winden has pointed out, a principal portion and major contribution of the entire work; and, although Chalcidius's quotations from the *Timaeus*, and commentary on them, are channelled to some extent by the directionality and progression of topics within the Greek text at hand — those subjects and the content, as Chalcidius understands them, of the terms that Plato brings up, one after the other — the section on *silva* not only constitutes the most prominent indication of Chalcidius's own priorities, but there is also good reason to believe that the implications of this particular term became a foundational aspect of a recognizable medieval intellectual culture.<sup>10</sup>

*Silva*, as the editor of the *Timaeus latinus* notes in his chapter heading, is explained for at least seventy-three pages in Waszink's edition, as Chalcidius gives the reader a tour-de-force of what *silva* contains, what could be done with this stuff, and at the same time providing a vocabulary for the discipline of music for the next one and one-half millennia. We are led from the unseen, vivifying, force of the world, essentially unlimited and without boundaries, namely *anima*, to the bond of *anima* with a containing, delimiting body; then, from sight to *vox* and *sound*, that is, again, from differentiated, contained, *voice* to auditory *stuff*, unlimited and uncontained. Chalcidius then takes up *silva*, coalescing and, essentially, superimposing two Latin words, *anima* and *silva*, to explain the Greek *hyle*. In the course, then, of his translation and commentary, what is clear is that *silva* refers simultaneously to both: that which is seen (the visible stuff of the world) as well as, and in full equivalence with, all of the *unseen* stuff of the world, or *anima*. *Silva*, therefore, includes and is best exemplified by sound, since sound is both material, substantial, *and* unseen. *All* stuff, seen and unseen, sounded and unsounded, is included in this disorderly thicket of sounded and unsounded material — an equivalence carefully prepared by the translator.

<sup>10</sup> See *Timaeus*, introduction, p. xxvii, with regard to the passage quoted above ('Necessitatem porro nunc appellat hylen, quam nos Latine silvam possumus nominare', chap. 268), where the reader is drawn to the comment of J. C. M. van Winden: 'therefore, Chalcidius' lengthy chapter on *materia/silva* is actually more than a treatment of one of the two principal subjects [...]. It is, in point of fact the fundamental part of his entire commentary' (*Chalcidius on Matter, his Doctrine and Sources*, Philosophia antiqua, 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1959), p. 23).

*Silva*, then, as a conceptualization, is applicable to, and inclusive of, the entire physical and conceptual world. When divided or individuated, one can imagine this individuation or delineatory result as a branch, the Latin *stirps* or *virga*, a protruding, defining stem from the disorderly mass of the entire forest of *silva*; as Chalcidius states, 'stirps figurae'. The rough, heaped up wood of a forest as an imaginary construct is placed before one's mind in terms of the careful separation of a single twig. Likewise, rough, undifferentiated conceptual substance containing inner energy is bonded to a single written-out figure, a written 'twig', or *virga*. The branch or twig is animated, both in the world we observe around us and conceptually, within the delineation of intention within the generality of sound.<sup>11</sup> This gives a new seriousness to working with invisible, even inaudible, substance and brings to mind the question that has been asked before: Do human beings *ever* take anything seriously that they cannot conceive as 'material' in nature?<sup>12</sup>

Now, *silva* as a term for material resource within the *Timaeus* occurred to some, not to others, was accepted by some and not by others. Cicero, for example, in his fragmentary translation of the *Timaeus* uses *substantia*, *materia*, as does twelfth-century William of Conches in his *Timaeus* commentary. On the other hand, Bernardus Silvestris makes a point of the equivalence of substance, both seen and unseen, using explicitly the term *silva*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> In other words, *silva* as *fundamentum* is differentiated, figuratis (also Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, A4.985b14; hyle is differentiated, schema (also Aristotle, *Physica*, A2.184b2. *Silva*, therefore, is more than a 'congestion'.

<sup>12</sup> For the linguistic properties discussed in this section, see A. L. Becker, *Beyond Translation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995). The assertion that has been made that Chalcidius received his concept of *silva* from 'the Pythagoreans' either contradicts nearly everything Pythagoras is credited for originating or has little to do directly what Pythagoras supposedly advocated, i.e., immortality and transmigration of souls, and that the soul is made of air. (See the concise account of Richard D. McKirahan, Jr, *Philosophy Before Socrates: An Introduction with Texts and Commentary* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), pp. 79–115). Furthermore, the problem of *silva* is not only conceptual but translational, having to do with specific languages and linguistic propensities, potentialities, and properties. See also Stephen Gersh's valuable discussion of the concept of 'structure', especially in Chapter 1 of *Concord in Discourse: Harmonics and Semiotics in Late Classical and Early Medieval Platonism* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> Bernardus Silvestris expressly uses the term *silva*; in fact, a thorough survey of Bernardus's use of the term would constitute a study in itself. See Brian Stock, *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Bernard Silvester* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 35, 67, 69, 70, 77n, 84, 87, 97–118, 119, 121, 122, 134, 138, 143n, 199n, 203n, 222, 226, 233; 'While Bernard uses *hyle* and *silva* almost interchangeably, he also seems to imply a subtle distinction between them, as if they represented different aspects of prime matter. *Silva* seems to be

The concept, however, was to grant rationality, influence, and seriousness to the discipline of music since music deals with the unseen yet substantial *materia* of sound, time, and motion. *Silva* as a term made no distinction between unseen and seen *materia*, granting both co-equivalent materiality, and thus proved to be a point worth making and defending. Music, above all, illustrates this concept of unseen materiality, and on this basis took its place as a material and measurement discipline within medieval education throughout the Middle Ages and certainly into the fifteenth century. This is the line of reasoning taken. Sonorous substance is massive and undifferentiated but can become delineated by means of the expression and delineation of internal, germane properties. These could be indicated by means of linear *figurae*. In fact the term used brings to mind both forest, *silva*, and a delineating twig out of that forest, *stirps* or *virga*, exemplified in the music notational *figura* indicating, from the late ninth, early tenth century on, an accented, differentiated, musical tone/voice, that is also higher than the tone that occurred previously to its sounding. (One could consider this an accented, self-contained 'piece' of sound-substance that has been extracted from all of the sound-substance that might hypothetically be available, and which one might appropriate.) The Latin *stirps*, a *virga*, as it is named, constituted an enlivened stem within the general, inchoate mass of sonic material, a twig, *virga*, from the entire *silva* or forest of material substance.

But both the influence of the *Timaeus latinus* and of music as the illustrative, exemplary discipline, making comprehensible invisible substance, need to be taken into consideration in the fifteenth century as well. Cusanus, in his treatise concerning the origin and nature of all things, his own commentary on the Old Testament book of Genesis, the *Dialogus de genesi*, written so far as we know in the mid-40s (1445–47) before his more intensive preoccupation with the *Parmenides* and Proclus's commentary on it, quotes the *Timaeus*, investigates parallel subject matter, and develops his own priorities. Cusanus, first of all, is well

synonymous with the concrete chaos of the primitive elements, while *hyle* is more abstract and mysterious, an indefinable substratum' (p. 100). Of particular importance is the commentary on Martianus Capella's early fifth-century *Nuptials of Philology and Mercury*, containing lengthy comments on the topic of Chalcidius's use of *silva* (Cambridge University Library, MS Mm. I.18, fols 1<sup>r</sup>–18<sup>r</sup>; see E. Jeaneau, *Studi medievali*, 5 (1964), 844–49, 855–64), in which Jeaneau gives reasons for believing the commentary to have been authored by Bernardus. See also Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), especially pp. 158–86, and *De mundi universitate*, ed. by C. S. Barach and J. Wrobel (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1876), pp. 8–13, and the more recent critical edition of André Vernet (dissertation, Paris, École des Chartes, 1937).

aware of the fact that he is writing within a tradition of the Genesis commentary, since he refers to and quotes many who have preceded him within this tradition, such as Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, to name only a few. Further, he quotes the *Timaeus* at key points within his argument. Cusanus would certainly have known the implications of Chalcidius's *silva* as a possible expression of the inexpressible — without limitations, vast, containing all things, both visible and invisible, full of potential, and, especially, the potential for movement. Bringing together a compendium of writers that indicates both his own authority and the depth and breadth of his own reading, as well as the carefulness and expertise of his editors, Cusanus traces the following mental path, as he states, a way of the mind — *viam animae* — alternating as a dialogue between two speaker/writers, Conradus and Nicolaus.<sup>14</sup>

First, one needs and uses the ministry disciplines of material and measurement, the liberal arts, especially in cases where there is less odour and more nutrient. But going forward, one is interested in the convergence of beginning and end, of origin and of conclusion. Beginning, therefore, is not beginning; and ending is not ending. So it is that what one is going after is the *incomprehensible*, as the psalmist has stated, 'Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure' (Psalm 102. 25–26).<sup>15</sup> So Conrad states, from the same cause proceeds everything, both diverse and adverse.

At this point — actually early on in the treatise — the real crux of the matter is inserted by Nicolaus, who brings up the concept of *absolutum* as co-equivalent with *eternum*. The Absolute-eternal is, as he states, 'aeternum, simplex, interminium, infinitum, inalterabile, immultiplicabile et ita de ceteris': eternal, simple, unbounded, infinite, inalterable, not subject to multiplication, therefore all that there is as it is.<sup>16</sup> Nicolaus goes on to state that we know the absolute in its op-

<sup>14</sup> The King James translation of the Psalter has been given. All page and section numbers included here refer to the most recent collected edition: Nicolas of Cusa, *Opera omnia, issu et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Heidelbergensis ad codicum fidem edita* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1959–2005), IV: *Opuscula 1: De deo abscondito, De quaerendo deum, De filiationes dei, De dato patris luminum, Coniectura de ultimis diebus, De genesi*, ed. by Paul Wilpert (1959). We see the treatises having to do with 'Conjectures concerning end times', and 'Concerning origins' here placed side by side.

<sup>15</sup> For an important interpretation of the 'incomprehensibility' of God, see Peter Casarella, 'Sacraments', in *Introducing Nicholas of Cusa: A Guide to a Renaissance Man*, ed. by Christopher M. Bellitto, Thomas M. Izbicki, and Gerald Christianson (New York: Paulist, 2004), pp. 347–72.

<sup>16</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 144, 5.

posite, in that which is diverse, composite, contracted, general, special ('Unde absolutum idem tale intelligo, in quo oppositio, quae idem non patitur, inveniri nequit, ut omnia alia diversa, opposita, composita, contracta, generalia, specialia et cetera').<sup>17</sup> Referring to the *Timaeus* (28A to 29B), Cusanus notes that one sees (that is, one can apprehend) innumerable things that participate within the *absolute*, with an *aptitude* to being brought to completion, that is, through operation, number, weight and measure, each according to its own way.<sup>18</sup>

The Absolute contains within itself all things, without limitation, varied and diverse, both in opposition to one another and unified, generation and corruption. In short, the Absolute (*absolutum*) contains and encompasses as a concept all of the properties inherent within *materia-substantia*. Cusanus helps himself richly to a vocabulary that has been in place for a long time, invoking the terms and concepts of *materia*, *modi*, *figurae*, *figuraliter*, and *proprietas/perfectio*, which had been exemplified within the discipline of music as the analogical-exemplary discipline for at least five hundred years.

But try as one will, the Absolute at the end of the day is inexpressible, ineffable, and this is the reason why Cusanus, who would certainly have been aware of Chalcidius's term *silva*, does not use it. Chalcidius deliberately launched that particular translation of *hyle* into the Latin language and onto the Latin-reading public because it brings to the inner eye — the imagination — a normal, everyday vision of what could be observed in everyday life, namely, a forest. As such, the concept of *hyle* was, as we have noticed, demystified. A philosophical term was brought into the realm of everyday experience, in other words, what one could envision and imagine. One can also imagine *potential* as unlimited resources resident within *silva*. Without putting oneself to any trouble at all, one could imagine a forest full of trees, full of potential for making furniture, even when that 'forest' was a limitless forest of invisible sound. Cusanus also deals with the act of, as he states, 'fabrication within all fabrications',<sup>19</sup> but his real priority is the absolute, what can, by no means, be expressed. There are, in fact, for Cusanus, several modes of the inexpressible: 'quasi sint sapientum varii conceptus inexpressibilis modi' (How man is neither able to conceive of, nor to express the 'divine mode').<sup>20</sup> The use of the term *modus* in these contexts is significant.

<sup>17</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 145, 16–19.

<sup>18</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 152, 1–5: 'sive idem ipsum modo'.

<sup>19</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 147, 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 159, 5–11: a comparison between 'human' and 'divine' modes of expression. By means of the superficiality of *figurae/litterales superficies*, the absolute is approached; p. 161,

Apart from the fact that Cusanus actually quotes it, the influence of the *Timaetus latinus* is then not to be found so easily, that is, in the repetition of a common term — even one that Chalcidius emphasized through seventy-three pages of commentary. Not everything, unfortunately, can be accessed by vocabulary held in common — terms that can easily be picked out, even without actually reading the texts under consideration. The influence of the *Timaetus latinus* is, as Klibansky and others have pointed out, not easy to discern; and we need to read Cusanus's entire treatise, not just go hunting for words. A good deal of so-called research is now done by word searches, given enhanced electronic databases, but why should we expect Cusanus to more or less simple-mindedly parrot expressions without making them his own? In this particular case, he has taken *silva* and both infused it with meaning and fused it with his own priorities.

Of course, if Cusanus had had nothing to add to what was generally known from reading the *Timaetus* and its commentary, he, presumably, would not have written his treatise. The *Timaetus latinus* with its concept of limitless material substance, *silva*, discerned by the inner mind as concrete *materia*, is fused here with properties to be found in the *Aristoteles latinus*, namely the *Physica*, together with Aquinas's commentary on the concept of participation.<sup>21</sup> Cusanus also makes a case here for his concept of *absolutum* because he is a Christian, because he believes that there is a lot 'out there', and not all — or even much of it — is accessible to the likes of us.

Now, Chalcidius in his Latin translation of the *Timaetus* departs from Plato's text in an additional, very important way. Plato writes, Chalcidius translates: 'In praise of seeing', that the sense of sight is of great value, since we are reassured by the recurrence that we observe by means of that sense. Chalcidius then, however, goes on to state that the sense of hearing should also be praised. Following this statement, Chalcidius goes on to explain his translation of the Greek *hyle* into the Latin *silva*, with the point that *silva* encompasses both seen as well as unseen *materia substantia*.<sup>22</sup>

5–6: 'modum humaniter propter audientes ut fructum faceret [...] quamvis homo divinum modum nec concipere nec exprimere posit nisi varia assimilatione'; p. 162, 12, addresses the question of representation by similitude.

<sup>21</sup> See Aristotle, *Physica*, II (B.I.192b14.21), a topic for a separate study; but see John Wippel's useful summary in his article 'Essence and Existence', in *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg, with Eleanore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), especially pp. 394–96.

<sup>22</sup> *Timaetus*, ed. Waszink, pp. 248–49, at 15, 'De visu'; p. 269, 'Laus videndi'.

For Cusanus, as we have observed, the absolute as the ‘divine mode’ is for the most part inaccessible, ineffable, inexpressible, but, however, humanly speaking, available through the access of hearing, the ‘human mode of the auditory faculty’.<sup>23</sup> Not only is Cusanus referring here to Chalcidius’s praise of the auditory faculty, but he is referring as well to music’s function as the exemplary, illustrative discipline, making the inexpressible plain. Further, the absolute can also be accessed, again by the human mode of *figurae* — alphabetical letters in syntax — as Moses, *figuraliter*, was able bring to the comprehension of the human mind the reality of the differentiation and individuation of all things from the limitless incomprehensibility of what was there at Creation and what, indeed, God did with it. This then, Moses’ mode of writing, that is, *figuraliter*, is for Cusanus a *modus* of communication that he designates as *humaniter*.<sup>24</sup>

Individuation within inchoate substance, identification within the ineffable, this was brought about humanly, *figurally*, by the narrative of Moses in the first book of the Pentateuch, the Book of Genesis. For Chalcidius as well, differentiation and identity are given forth by characteristic figures, *figurae*, as twigs within the forest of inchoate mass. Cusanus replaces *silva* with *absolutum*, but the means of differentiation and of comprehensibility are exactly the same, namely, *figuraliter*, the varied and diverse *figurae* of writing, of numbers, of geometrical figures, and of astronomical constellations. Above all, the concept and tool of figure, *figura*, could be exemplified plainly by music notation that differentiated individual tones from mass of sound, namely as *voice*, *vox* within *sonus*, writes Cusanus. (Example: *virga* differentiates single tone from mass of sound; voice, as entire ‘part’ within a musical composition.) ¶

It is not by happenstance or conventionality that Cusanus brought up the topic of music as he discusses the most important feature of this treatise. What could music, even the music of his time, provide as exemplary of all he has discussed here in his treatise on the creation of the world, its substance, and how this creation could be understood by human beings, in a very human way? Both Chalcidius and Cusanus have a common interest of writing so that they could be

<sup>23</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 161, 5: ‘quia dicit modum humaniter propter audientes, ut fructum faceret’ (quoted above).

<sup>24</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 165, 9–10: ‘Quae quidem assimilatio est verbum intellectuale, quod in rationali et illud in sensibili figuratur. Unde sensibile quoad eius vocalitatem surgit de silentio per gradus de confuso sono in discretam articularem vocem’ (What is sensible (i.e., amenable to sense experience), is ‘figured’, or delineated, arising as voice from silence, gradually from a confusion of sound into discrete articulated voice. *Figurae* articulate, make discrete, make comprehensible, and individuate, from the limitless confusion of inchoate sound substance).

understood. After all, Chalcidius was also much interested in rendering the amorphous and ambiguous Greek *hyle* into the concrete, comprehensible term *silva*.

What can music make plain? First, the concept of *perfection*, of bringing to an appropriate conclusion properties inherent within substance, is well exemplified by the finished music composition fabricated from essentially limitless possible sound *materia*. Secondly, Cusanus's concept of *modus* upon which he so often relies, that is, ways or manners of moving, can be understood as delineated by discrete melodic lines working together within a composition of more than one part, but each nevertheless retaining its discretion, autonomy, and identity. Thirdly, the concept of limitless pre-existent *materia*, present before the world began as *silva*, or *absolutum*, is also present before a composer such as Dufay, who was Cusanus's contemporary, began to compose. In one case of Dufay's composition, a song, such as the chanson, 'Se la face pale', in another case, a Marian antiphon was available and well known before Dufay began to compose one or the other of his Mass ordinaries upon which his career and reputation rested. The chanson, or Marian antiphon, were used by Dufay as an already existing material upon which to base his ensuing composition. Further, in any case, the limitless resources of sound were at his disposal before he began.

Fourthly, Cusanus's observation that the 'divine mode' is inconceivable or incapable of expression unless by varying assemblages or combinations, or as he states, 'variously put together',<sup>25</sup> is marvellously exemplified by the various assemblages of tones according to mode within a music composition, for example, by Cusanus's contemporary, Dufay. Again, music provides an analogy to a concept of the absolute as limitless inexpressibility, but available to the sense of hearing by means of varying combinations. Cusanus is even more pointed and emphatic with respect to music's disciplinary function as he states, to summarize, all action represents creative power; the presence of heard motion in music represents creation itself in a particular manner.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps most difficult is the topic of infusion of 'spirit' into material; how this 'creative power' is transmitted by the artist into the object, or by the composer into the work of musical art. Cusanus uses the example of material and the master glassmaker, of the mediating spirit moving within material according to the will of the master. This is Aristotle's 'ensouled body'<sup>27</sup> delineating and delimiting

<sup>25</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 161, 6–7: 'nisi varia assimilatione'.

<sup>26</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 162, 12.

<sup>27</sup> See especially Aristotle, *De anima* (On the Soul), trans. by J. A. Smith, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Jonathan Barnes, Revised Oxford Translation, Bollingen Series, 71.2

discrete identity within the boundless and limitless *materia-substantia* — Chalcidius's *silva*, Cusanus's *absolutum*. Again, music exemplifies inspirited movement within containment even more accurately than the glassblower's glob of molten glass thrust into a receptacle, since the material enspirited, so to say, by the mind and thought of the glassblower will, quite soon, harden, whereas sound, so long as it sounds, continues to be mobile, exemplifying motion itself.

Why does Cusanus, in this particular case, not use an example based on and rooted in sound? That is precisely what he proceeds to do.<sup>28</sup> The inaudible is made known by the audible; confused, inchoate sound *materia* is made knowable within discrete, articulate voice, as a *vox* that can be fashioned and is subject to be fashioned ('confuso sono in discretum articularem vocem vox formata sed formabilis'). This quality of the malleable, formable voice-part infused with creative spirit, though abstract, can be understood in the example of the music composition of Cusanus's contemporary, Dufay.

Music, for Chalcidius, and Cusanus made the complex simple, an abstraction plain. Music, using invisible yet knowable substance explained how creative power could infuse an invisible receptacle, and thus, how Creation itself could be understood. Music, also for Cusanus, made known the ways of God to man.

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), bk II, chap. 8, 420b, pp. 669–70, dealing with 'body' as containment, full of 'soulish substance', generating sound because it is, in fact, filled with this sonorous substance. Aristotle goes on to write: 'Voice is a kind of sound characteristic of what has soul in it; nothing that is without soul utters voice.' See also my 'Ensouled Bodies: The Continuity of the Theme of "The Body as Instrument"', *Journal of Physiology, Paris*, 101 (2007), 280–91.

<sup>28</sup> *Opuscula*, p. 165, at 9; as well as p. 165, 14: 'Sonus igitur possibilitas seu vocis propinqua materia existit' (cf. *Timaeus*, p. 272). What is ineffable and inexpressible can be configured by means of letters, joined into words and syntax. Plato's *Timaeus* comes to the same conclusion, namely, *silva* is made comprehensible, i.e. known, by *figurae*.



## THE AFTERLIFE AS A MIRROR OF PRINCES: MACROBIUS IN THE QUATTROCENTO

E. Ann Matter

When medieval authors made reference to classical antiquity, they often drew on a type of late antique encyclopedic literature that formed an intermediary stage between the golden ages of Greece and Rome and their own intellectual worlds. Marcia Colish has dubbed the fourth- to seventh-century authors of this literature the ‘transmitters’. Colish points out that some of these, like Martianus Capella, Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Isidore of Seville, were quite consciously deliberate about transmitting the wisdom of antiquity to their own times and beyond; while others, such as the grammarians Donatus and Priscian, and the great commentator on Virgil and Cicero, Macrobius, should better be called inadvertent transmitters, since the bequeathing of classical learning was not the purpose of their works, but a fortuitous side effect.<sup>1</sup> These inadvertent transmitters were influential throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, largely because they were a core part of the school curriculum; so, even at the turn of the fifteenth century, when the classical authors were being rediscovered and studied anew on their own, the influence of the late antique transmitters can be seen. This study hopes to show one instance of that phenomenon by investigating the influence of Macrobius on an early Italian humanist, Alberto Alfieri.

We know very little about Macrobius, including the exact dates in which he lived and wrote. Scholars have tried to link Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius, *vir clarissimus et inlustris*, as he is called in some of the earliest manuscripts of his

<sup>1</sup> Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition, 400–1400*, The Yale Intellectual History of the West (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 42–43.

works, to various Roman dignitaries who lived in the late fourth and early fifth centuries; this literature has also gone back and forth about whether or not he was a Christian.<sup>2</sup> Current opinion suggests that he was writing in the first half of the fifth century and was one of the last pagan authors of Rome.<sup>3</sup> This would place him between Donatus, who was one of the teachers of Jerome in the fourth century, and Priscian, who lived in the early sixth century.<sup>4</sup> These were exactly the years in which Christianity won the day in the imperial courts and schools, but Macrobius never identified himself as a Christian, nor do his works quote Christian sources, even if they show a number of resonances to New Testament texts.<sup>5</sup>

Macrobius is the most theoretical of the inadvertent transmitters. Even though his two authenticated works follow two standard forms: a compilation of sources, especially Virgil, in the form of a symposium called the *Saturnalia*,<sup>6</sup> and a commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*.<sup>7</sup> What makes Macrobius unique among the inadvertent transmitters is how strongly his works manifest a strict Neoplatonic philosophical bias. In fact, Macrobius can be said to be making use of the more ancient Latin authors to promulgate a Neoplatonist view; as William Harris Stahl puts it, 'Cicero would have been highly amused at Macrobius' ingenuity in twisting his plain and simple meaning to fit some precise Neoplatonic

<sup>2</sup> For a good summary of the debates over the identity of Macrobius, see the introduction to Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, trans. by William Harris Stahl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 3–9.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Cameron, 'The Date and Identity of Macrobius', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 56 (1966), 25–38.

<sup>4</sup> For the school of Donatus in Rome, see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), pp. 10–17; for Priscian, see Guglielmo Balaría, *Prisciano e i suoi amici* (Turin: Giappichelli, 1989), and Margaret T. Gibson, 'Milestones in the Study of Priscian, circa 800–circa 1200', *Viator*, 23 (1992), 17–33.

<sup>5</sup> See P. W. Van Der Horst, 'Macrobius and the New Testament: A Contribution to the Corpus Hellenisticum', *Novum Testamentum*, 15 (1973), 2202–32, for lexical, stylistic, historical, philosophical, and religious parallels between Macrobius and the New Testament, and an argument that Macrobius was, nevertheless, a pagan.

<sup>6</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, ed. by J. Willis (Leipzig: Teubner, 1963).

<sup>7</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, ed. by J. Willis (Leipzig: Teubner, 1970); see also the more recent editions: *Commento al Somnium Scipionis*, ed. by Mario Regali, 2 vols (Pisa: Giardini, 1983), with an Italian translation, and *Commentaire au Songe de Scipion*, 2 vols, ed. by Mireille Armisen-Marchetti (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2001), with a French translation. The only English translation is by Stahl.

doctrine.<sup>8</sup> Macrobius has been shown by recent scholars to have developed his own idiosyncratic form of Neoplatonism<sup>9</sup> and to have reflected the broad set of late antique cosmological beliefs generally known as ‘Gnostic’, or what the great scholar P. Festugière called ‘la littérature platonico-gnostique’.<sup>10</sup>

Macrobius’s huge influence during the Latin Middle Ages was primarily due to the fact that his *Commentary* was an important part of the school curriculum. Cicero’s account of the dream of the great war hero Scipio Africanus, in which he travels through all of the realms of heaven (just as do the souls of the dead, according to the Plato’s ‘Myth of Er’, the testimony of the man who died and was resurrected),<sup>11</sup> became an important source for astronomers, cosmologists, literary scholars, and theologians, and continued to be read from the first Christian schools to the scholastic universities.<sup>12</sup> Macrobius was especially influential in the Carolingian schools and among the twelfth-century Platonists, but his influence has also been seen in the Italian Renaissance, especially in the works of Dante and Petrarch.<sup>13</sup> The knowledge of Macrobius by these Italian writers brings us very close, linguistically and thematically, to the early fifteenth-century author who is the subject of this essay, Alberto Alfieri.

<sup>8</sup> Macrobius, *Commentary*, trans. Stahl, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Jacques Flamant, *Macrobe et le néo-platonisme latin à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Leiden: Brill, 1977); Stephen Gersh, *Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism: The Latin Tradition*, 2 vols (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), II, 493–595.

<sup>10</sup> Jacques Flamant, ‘Éléments gnostiques dans l’œuvre de Macrobe’, in *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenic Religions Presented to Gilles Quispel on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. by R. Van Den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1981), pp. 131–42; for the quotation from Festugière, see p. 136 n. 20.

<sup>11</sup> Plato, *Republic*, X.614.

<sup>12</sup> For the reception of Macrobius in the Middle Ages, see Irene Caiazzo, *Lectures médiévales de Macrobe: Le Glosae coloniensis super Macrobius* (Paris: Vrin, 2002), pp. 27–85, Bruce Eastwood, ‘Manuscripts of Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, Before 1500’, *Manuscripta*, 38 (1994), 138–55, and the classic of M. Schedler, *Die Philosophie des Macrobius und ihr Einfluss auf die Wissenschaft des christlichen Mittelalters*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters, 13.1 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1916), summarized by Stahl in *Commentary*, pp. 42–50.

<sup>13</sup> Schedler, *Die Philosophie des Macrobius*, p. 147; André Pézard, ‘Dante et Macrobe: La tierce voie de beatitude’, in *Orbis mediaevalis: Mélanges de langue et littérature médiévales offerts à Reto Raduolf Bezzola à l’occasion de son quatre-vingtième anniversaire*, ed. by Georges Güntert, Marc-René Jung, and Kurt Ringger (Berne: Francke, 1978), pp. 281–83, Mary Louise Lord, ‘The Use of Macrobius and Boethius in Some Fourteenth-Century Commentaries on Virgil’, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 3 (1996–97), 3–22.

We know even less about Alberto Alfieri than we do about Macrobius. Alfieri is remembered only as the author of the *Ogdoas*, a collection of eight dialogues between deceased members of two important families of the northern Italian nobility, the Visconti and the Adorno.<sup>14</sup> Alfieri identifies himself as a Genoese citizen residing in the colony of Caffa, a Genoese stronghold and trading town on the Black Sea.<sup>15</sup> By birth, he says, he is Milanese, since he was born in Albano, a village in the district of Vercelli. From what Alfieri says, or rather, what the interlocutors of the *Ogdoas* say, about Italian politics, it is most likely that Alfieri was present in Milano and Genova successively between 1402 (the date of Gian Galeazzo Visconti's death) and 1418 (when Jacopo Adorno was elected consul of Caffa), and can assume that he was active between the last two decades of the fourteenth century and the first two of the fifteenth.

Other than the self-given testimony in the *Ogdoas*, Alfieri has remained a shadowy figure. Antonio Ceruti, who first published the *Ogdoas* text in 1885, and Giovanni Ponte, who wrote about it in 1997, both encountered the same difficulty in tracing Alfieri's life.<sup>16</sup> Other historians of Genoa's fifteenth-century

<sup>14</sup> This text is extant in only one manuscript, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS L91, Sup., fols 61<sup>r</sup>–75<sup>r</sup>. The manuscript is described in the *Inventario Ceruti dei manoscritti della Biblioteca Ambrosiana*, L. Sup. – R. Sup. (Trezzano: Etimar, 1978), pp. 56–57. It was first edited by Antonio Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas di Alberto Alfieri: Episodi di storia genovese nei primordii del secolo XV', *Atti della società ligure di storia patria*, 17 (1885), 255–320. A new edition and English translation is forthcoming: *Education, Civic Virtue, and Colonialism in Fifteenth-Century Italy: The 'Ogdoas' of Alberto Alfieri*, ed. and trans. by Carla P. Weinberg and E. Ann Matter (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, forthcoming 2010).

<sup>15</sup> Genoa had established a flourishing commercial base at the southern tip of the Crimean Peninsula (then known in Italy as 'Gazaria', or 'land of the Khazars'). The Khazars were a Turkic population from Central Asia who had settled in the lower Volga region in the seventh century CE. Many converted to Judaism in the eighth and ninth centuries; see Roberto Sabatino Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1938), p. 296. Caffa's position in the Black Sea allowed control of the maritime traffic with the Azov Sea, giving the city not only great commercial importance, but also administrative prominence over the other Genoese bases in the northern and southern coasts from the last quarter of the thirteenth century on. See the photos of Genoese fortifications that survived till modern times, in Camillo Manfroni, *I colonizzatori italiani durante il medio evo e il rinascimento*, 2 vols (Rome: La libreria dello stato, 1933), I, 258–59, II, 137.

<sup>16</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 260–63; Giovanni Ponte, 'Un grammatico del primo Quattrocento fra i Visconti e gli Adorno: Politica, morale e letteratura nell' *Ogdoas* di Alberto Alfieri', in *Filologia Umanistica*, ed. by Vincenzo Fera and Giacomo Ferraù, 3 vols (Padua: Antenore, 1997), II, 1485–1500. See also Giuseppe Oreste, 'Alfieri Alberto', in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, gen. ed. Alberto M. Ghisalberti, 62 vols to date (Rome: Istituto della enciclopedia italiana, 1960–), II, 263–64.

commercial and colonial expansion have mentioned the *Ogdoas* in passing, recognizing it as a valuable source of information about the context of Genoese expansion in the fifteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

In a prologue and an elegy at the end of the *Ogdoas* Alfieri tells the reader that he wrote the dialogues in Caffa, but he has clear knowledge of both Milan and Genoa. The Visconti are the heroes of the dialogues, their exploits recorded in some detail, suggesting that he lived in Milan sometime between the last years of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century, perhaps receiving his education there. On the other hand, Alfieri declares himself a Genoese citizen, provides copious information on Genoese events, and tediously reiterates his devotion to the Adorno family, suggesting that he also resided in Genoa sometime before his departure for Caffa. The only known reference to Alfieri outside of the *Ogdoas* does in fact come from Genoa. This is a document at the Archivio di Stato in Genoa, a legal agreement written in 1408, signed before a notary and witnessed by three teachers of grammar, that divides several private summer schools in areas of Genoa where the Doria and the Spinola and other members of the ruling classes lived in the summer.<sup>18</sup> The three teachers give their names as Albertus de Alpheris de Albano, Ludovico de Guastis, and Jacopo di Santo Salvatore, thus showing that in 1408 Alberto Alfieri was teaching in Genoa.<sup>19</sup>

Alfieri's native village of Albano was and is located on the border of Lombardy and the Piedmont, a few miles north of Vercelli, near the River Sesia. By the last decades of the fourteenth century, presumably the period of our author's birth, Albano and Vercelli had been part of the Visconti sphere of influence for a long time, officially included in the duchy of Milan when Wenceslas, King of the Romans, invested Gian Galeazzo Visconti with the ducal title in 1395.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Lopez, *Storia delle colonie genovesi nel Mediterraneo*, p. 357; Giorgio and Giovanni Stella, *Annales genuenses*, ed. by Giovanna Petti Balbi (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1975), p. 252 n. 1; Geo Pistarino, *I Gin dell'Oltremare* (Genoa: Civico istituto colombiano, 1988), p. 35; Steven A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 252.

<sup>18</sup> Archivio di Stato di Genoa, Antichi Notai, not. Lombardi di Santo Stefano, filza 1, doc. 31, 7 March 1408. The four suburbs of Genoa were Fassolo, Campi, Sampierdarena, and Sestri.

<sup>19</sup> Giovanna Petti Balbi, *L'Insegnamento nella Liguria medievale: Scuole, maestri e libri* (Genoa: Tilgher, 1979), p. 87 and n. 41, who first quoted the document, wrongly read the locality of origin of Alberto Alfieri as 'Albaro', then an eastern suburb of Genoa and now part of the city, but, according to Carla P. Weinberg, the document clearly reads 'Albano', the native town of the author of the *Ogdoas*.

<sup>20</sup> Bernardino Corio, *Storia di Milano*, ed. by Anna Morisi Guerra, 2 vols (Turin: Unione tipografico-editrice torinese, 1978), II, 931.

Thus, even though Alfieri would have gravitated towards Milan for his education, it seems he went from there to Genoa, where he was employed as a teacher before leaving for Caffa. Perhaps Alfieri's migration to the colonies demonstrates his inability to break into the monopoly of school positions in Genoa controlled by the Collegium, a corporation of grammar teachers founded in 1298, whose members were few and usually Genoese citizens by birth. The best teaching and administrative posts in the public urban schools were reserved for this elite, but the increasing demand for the education of the emerging mercantile class created a great opportunity for teachers from other parts of Italy to teach in Genoa and its vicinity, mostly in private schools. Few of them were admitted into the corporation, so they mostly worked for smaller salaries and in less desirable locations, under the control of those who were members of the Collegium. Considering the schools assigned to Alfieri by the agreement of 1408, it seems that he had a subaltern role, so perhaps Alfieri left for Caffa to escape the limitations of the local situation, as had other professional men of northern Italy.<sup>21</sup>

The eight dialogues known as the *Ogdoas* make up a curious combination of several classical and medieval literary genres: the journey to the Heavens/Afterworld (found in Plato, Cicero, Virgil, Dante), the speculative cosmology so beloved of medieval monastic authors (Hrabanus Maurus, John Scotus Eriugena, Honorius of Autun, Vincent de Beauvais), and the hortatory and educational tradition of the 'mirror of princes', by which advice about proper rule is given to young noblemen.<sup>22</sup> Alfieri's work grows out of an early Humanist context, especially that of Milan, where classical literature became the vehicle for exploration of a concept of 'liberty' within a firmly autocratic state, and where scholars such as Manuel Chrysoloras and Uberto Decembrio promoted the study of Plato, both in Greek and in Latin translation.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> On teachers and medical doctors in Caffa (in contrast to Genoa) and their contracted salaries in 1386, see Michel Balard, *La Romanie génoise (XII<sup>e</sup>-début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, 2 vols (Paris: École française de Rome, 1978), I, 375. Notarial documents on sale transactions in Caffa reveal the presence and the activity of Genoese and Italians from all different social extractions: Laura Balletto, *Genova Mediterraneo Mar Nero (sec. XIII-XV)* (Genova: Civico istituto colombiano, 1976), pp. 204-58.

<sup>22</sup> For the first two genres, see the discussions of the influence of Macrobius in Stahl, *Commentary*, and Schedler, *Die Philosophie des Macrobius*; the genre of the 'mirror of princes' dates back to the classical world and is found in Persian and Arabic literature as well. For an analysis of how it works in the *Ogdoas*, see E. Ann Matter, 'Teaching Virtue from the Ignoble Nobility: Alberto Alfieri's *Ogdoas* (1421)', in *Medieval Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Jeremy Duquesnay Adams*, ed. by Stephanie Hayes-Healy, 2 vols (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), I, 231-47.

<sup>23</sup> For Milanese humanism, see Eugenio Garin, 'La cultura milanese nella prima metà del XV secolo', in *Storia di Milano*, 16 vols (Milan: Fondazione Treccani degli Alfieri per la storia di

The *Ogdoas* obviously takes its name from the Greek word for 'eight', so on the most literal level the title refers to the fact that Alfieri has written eight dialogues. All of these include the same protagonist, Gabriele Maria Visconti, the illegitimate son of Duke Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Gian Galeazzo was the first Duke of Milan, a title he acquired by brutally disposing of his uncle, Bernabò in 1385. He died in 1402, leaving two legitimate sons, Giovanni Maria and Filippo Maria, to share the official power, and an illegitimate son, Gabriele Maria, to whom certain towns in Lombardy and Tuscany were deeded.<sup>24</sup> Gabriele was killed in either 1408 or 1409 by the French general Jean Le Meingre, known as Boucicaut, who was the governor of Genoa, so the internal time of the dialogues is no later than 1409, by which time all of the interlocutors were dead.<sup>25</sup> Actually, Alfieri gives internal evidence that the work was written in 1421; by this time Giovanni Maria Visconti, the older and less vicious of Gian Galeazzo's sons, had been dead almost a decade, leaving his depraved brother Filippo Maria as Duke of Milan.<sup>26</sup> Yet Giovanni Maria does not appear among the dead souls to whom Gabriele talks, nor is there any mention of his death. Instead, there is a detailed political analysis of the events between 1402 and 1409, summaries of the alliances, victories, and defeats of the Milanese and Genoese until the death of Gabriele Maria. Through this, the political fortunes of the Visconti (and to a lesser extent, the Adorno of Genoa) are seen through the different lenses provided by the different interlocutors.

Gabriele speaks with his father, Gian Galeazzo, four times: in Chapters 1, 2, 6, and 8. He has a discussion with his uncle Bernabò Visconti in Chapter 3; with Caterina Visconti, the Duchess of Milan and mother of Giovanni Maria and Filippo Maria, in Chapter 4; with his own mother, Gian Galeazzo's concubine, Agnese Mantegazza, in Chapter 5; and, most strikingly, with Antoniotto Adorno, Doge of Genoa, who died in 1390/91, in Chapter 7, the longest chapter. Each of these discussions includes some information about the world they all

Milano, 1953–66), VI, 546–608, and Ronald Witt, *Italian Humanism and Medieval Rhetoric* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

<sup>24</sup> For the history of the Visconti, see Corio, *Storia di Milano*, and Bonaccorso Pitti and Giovanni Morelli, *Ricordi*, in *Mercanti scrittori*, ed. by Vittore Branca (Milan: Rusconi, 1986).

<sup>25</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 257, Ponte, 'Un grammatico', p. 1486, and other earlier historians, such as Stella, *Annales*, p. 285, give 15 December 1408 as the date of Gabriele's execution. Corio, *Storia di Milano*, p. 1416, and, more recently, Vito Vitale, *Breviario della storia di Genova*, 2 vols (Genova: Società Ligure di storia patria, 1955), I, 151, date it to 1409.

<sup>26</sup> He refers to a plague that hit Venice in 1420/21, and dates the Consuls of Caffa; see Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 260, 265, 319.

left behind, yet the speakers are obviously all dead. Indeed, Gabriele, who was decapitated, presents a gruesome sight according to his father:<sup>27</sup> but each also touches on some aspect of the eight-sphered cosmos in which they now dwell. For example, in Chapter 7, Antoniotto Adorno first gives Gabriele a lesson in political economy, then tells him about the city of Caffa, going into great detail about the different nations who live there, and finally imparts a lesson about the spheres of the cosmos, as he (who has been dead longer than any of the other interlocutors) gets ready to ascend to a higher level.<sup>28</sup>

The otherworldly setting of the dialogues thus echoes a far more complex understanding of the number eight, including the spheres of the heavens elaborated in Pythagorean philosophy, and esoteric traditions of both pagan Hellenism and early Christian Gnosticism; the world, in short, of Macrobius.<sup>29</sup> As historians of music have noted, the connection between the number eight and the diatonic scale was attributed to Pythagoras, and from ancient times was connected to systems of mysticism and heavenly ascent.<sup>30</sup> We have already seen that Alfieri was influenced by Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, and even more by Macrobius's commentary on it,<sup>31</sup> yet neither Cicero nor Macrobius uses the words *Ogdoas* or *Ogdoad* to describe his setting. So where did Alfieri get this term and what does it evoke for him?

One source for a cosmic theory of seven levels of Creation ending in the eighth region of the Ogdoad is found in the Greek *Corpus Hermeticum*, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, 'The Thrice-Wise Hermes'.<sup>32</sup> These hermetic discourses about Creation and the afterlife probably date from the second or third century of the Common Era, but were thought in Alfieri's age to be ancient Egyptian texts. In the first discourse of Hermes Trismegistus, the 'Poimandres', there is a

<sup>27</sup> Gian Galleazzo asks 'Quid te cerno cruentem?' (Why do I see you covered with blood?): Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 269.

<sup>28</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 302–18.

<sup>29</sup> Warm thanks to Leslie MacCoull of MARTS for her invaluable suggestion that we look more closely at Macrobius as a major source for Alfieri.

<sup>30</sup> Eric Werner, 'The Oldest Sources of Octave and Octoechos', *Acta Musicologica*, 20 (1948), 1–9. Thanks to Ann Moyer for her help in tracing the history of 'Ogdoas' as a system.

<sup>31</sup> The *locus classicus* is Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, I.5.15, ed. Willis, p. 17: 'sphaerae ipsae octo sint quae moventur'; 'the revolving spheres are eight in number': trans. Stahl, p. 98.

<sup>32</sup> *Hermetica: The Greek 'Corpus Hermeticum' and the Latin 'Asclepius'*, trans. by Brian Copenhaver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Thanks to Peter Struck for help with the Greek hermetic material.

description of Creation where Mind gives birth to a most fair man in his father's image, one who is able to see into the cosmic framework. The anthropomorphized female figure, Nature, makes love to the man, and from this union are born 'the seven'. The human soul 'rushes up through the cosmic framework [...] and then, stripped of the effects of the cosmic framework, the human enters the region of the Ogdoad: he has his own proper power, and along with the blessed he hymns the father'.<sup>33</sup> Hermes continues:

Why have you surrendered yourselves to death, earthborn men, since you have the right to share in immortality? You who have journeyed with error, who have partnered with ignorance, think again: escape the shadowy light: leave corruption behind and take a share in immortality.<sup>34</sup>

It is tempting to think that Alfieri had been influenced by this text. If so, this would be evidence that he may have known some Greek, since the first Latin translation, by Marsilio Ficino, was not published until 1471, under the title *De potestate et sapientia Dei*.<sup>35</sup>

The cosmology of the *Corpus Hermeticum* was widely known in early Christian circles, though, especially among the Valentinians and other Gnostic groups, who described the 'Ogdoad' as the first level of escape from the prison of materiality.<sup>36</sup> Orthodox Christian authors also knew about this system; for example, in his critique of the Valentinians, Tertullian describes the Demiurge, the creator of the seven-layered heaven: 'Sabbatus, from the sevenness of his home; likewise his mother, Achamoth, is called Ogdoas from the analogy between her and the original group of eight'.<sup>37</sup> We know from a letter attributed to Valentinus that there were two regions of the Ogdoas in some Gnostic cosmologies.<sup>38</sup> In fact, the

<sup>33</sup> *Corpus Hermeticum* I: *Poimandres*, 1.25–26, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> *Corpus Hermeticum* I: *Poimandres*, 1.28, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> *De potestate et sapientia Dei*, Latin trans. by Marsilius Ficinus (Treviso: Gerardus de Lisa, 1471). For collected essays on the impact of the Hermetic Corpus following Ficino's translation see *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus (Washington, DC: Folgers, 1988); and *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, his Philosophy, his Legacy*, ed. by Michael J. B. Allen and Valery Rees, with Martin Davis (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

<sup>36</sup> *Corpus Hermeticum*, notes on 1.25, pp. 115–16.

<sup>37</sup> Tertullian, *Adversus Valentinianos*, XX, trans. by M. T. Riley, available online at the Tertullian Project, <[http://www.tertullian.org/works/adversus\\_valentinianos.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/works/adversus_valentinianos.htm)>.

<sup>38</sup> A. J. Visser, 'Der Lehrbrief der Valentinianer', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 12 (1958), 27–36, especially pp. 32–33.

importance of the concept of the Ogdoas for systems of personal ascent has been noted among Gnostic and Neoplatonic thinkers of all sorts in the second and third centuries,<sup>39</sup> including the Jewish Merkabah mysticism that centred on descriptions of the Heavenly Throne.<sup>40</sup> By the fourth century, the idea of Ogdoas had crossed into orthodox Christianity, where it became a symbol of resurrection among patristic authors in both Latin and Greek literary traditions, and is argued to have influenced Christian liturgy and architecture.<sup>41</sup>

In short, whether or not Alfieri could read the Greek of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, it seems clear that he named his treatise *Ogdoas* to emphasize the fact that his characters, especially Gabriele Maria Visconti, are engaged in a series of heavenly ascents by which they will purge themselves of their earthly lives and rise to the realm where, as the *Corpus Hermeticum* puts it, 'he also hears certain powers that exist beyond the ogdoadic region and hymn god with sweet voice'.<sup>42</sup>

The influence of Macrobius is evident from the very beginning of the *Ogdoas*. In the Prologue, immediately following the slavish dedication to Jacopo Adorno, Alfieri quotes, or at least summarizes, Plato at some length about the immortality of the soul, citing the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, especially the testimony of the Pamphylian man named Er who was resurrected from the dead. Then he introduces Cicero's narrative about the otherworldly journey of Scipio Africanus, who saw the same truth about the afterlife in a dream. This string of classical references may make Alfieri seem very learned, but in fact, all of this information is found, in the same order, in the opening chapter of Macrobius's *Commentary*.<sup>43</sup> Macro-

<sup>39</sup> Montserrat Jufresa, 'Basilides, A Path to Plotinus', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 35 (1981), 1–15.

<sup>40</sup> For a cogent description, see Gilles Quispel's review of Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1960), in *Vigiliae Christianae*, 15 (1961), 117–19. Quispel takes Scholem to task for not sufficiently marking the parallels among Jewish Gnosticism, Christian Gnosticism, and the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

<sup>41</sup> W. H. C. Frend has recently argued that Hermes Trismegistus entered the writings of orthodox Christian authors in the late third century through the north African apologists Arnobius and Lactantius, 'Some North African Turning Points in Christian Apologetics', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 57 (2006), 1–15; for later influences, see Reinhart Staats, 'Ogdoas als ein Symbol für die Auferstehung', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 26 (1972), 29–52; Antonio Quacquarelli, *L'ogdoade patristica e suoi riflessi nella liturgia e nei monumenti*, Quaderni di 'Vetera Christianorum', 7 (Bari: Adriatica, 1973).

<sup>42</sup> *Corpus Hermeticum* I: *Poimandres*, I.26, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Compare Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 266–67, to Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, I.1, ed. Willis, pp. 1–3; trans. Stahl, pp. 81–83.

bius, therefore, literally sets the otherworldly scene in which Alfieri's dialogues will take place.

In the second dialogue, when Gabriele and Gian Galeazzo are becoming reacquainted in this strange intermediate world, Gian Galeazzo presses his son to admit that he, Gian Galeazzo, was the greatest ruler in the history of the world. The son obliges:

*Father:* What if the fates had allowed me to live another five years?

*Son:* All Italy would have been subject to your rule.

*Father:* What if ten?

*Son:* Europe up to the Tana and to the marshes of the Meotides.<sup>44</sup>

*Father:* What if twenty?

*Son:* Asia, Africa and all the nations of men.

*Father:* Whose empire would be the greatest?

*Son:* Yours.

(*Pater:* Quid, si fata dedissent annos quinos excessisse?

*Filius:* Omnem Italiam tuo imperio paruisse.

*Pater:* Quid si decem?

*Filius:* Europam ad usque Tancum Meotidasque paludes.

*Pater:* Quid si bis decem?

*Filius:* Asiam, Affricam, omnesque hominum nationes.

*Pater:* Vtrius imperium potentius?

*Filius:* Tuum.)<sup>45</sup>

And yet, Gian Galeazzo tells his son, there is something more important than this earthly glory:

*Son:* What is more blessed than this kingdom of yours?

*Father:* Another.

*Son:* Which one?

<sup>44</sup> The Marshes of the Meotides (*Palus Maeotis*) was the name for the Sea of Azov into which the River Don flows. The grain of central Russia reached the Black Sea ports via this route. The most important port was Tana, controlled by the Venetians, but frequented by other Italians, including Genoese from Caffa. On Tana see Bernard Doumerc, 'La Tana au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Comptoir ou colonie', in *État et colonisation au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. by Michel Balard (Lyon: La Manufacture, 1989), pp. 251–65.

<sup>45</sup> Ceruti, 'L' *Ogdoas*', p. 274. All translations are from the forthcoming *Education, Civic Virtue, and Colonialism*.

*Father:* The one that presides above the stars, above Saturn, above the good and healthy Jupiter, above the horrible Mars, above the King Sun, source and moderator of every other light, above the sweetest star of Venus, above the fastest course of Mercury, above the moon, situated in the lowest sphere, illuminated by the rays of the sun.

*Son:* What kingdom is this?

*Father:* The most splendid and thoroughly filled with blessing.

(*Filius:* Quid beatius hoc ipso regno tuo?

*Pater:* Aliud.

*Filius:* Quod?

*Pater:* Quod stellis, quod Saturno, quod Ioui salubri optimo, quod Marti horribili, quod soli duci principi et moderatori reliquorum luminum, quod Veneri dulcissimo sideri, quod Mercurii uellocissimo cursui, quod lunae in infimo orbe sitae solis radiis illustratae praesidet. *Filius:* Quod regnum est istud?

*Pater:* Splendidissimum omni beatitudine penitus et refertum.)<sup>46</sup>

Gian Galeazzo goes on to deliver a formula for the rewards given to virtuous princes in the Afterlife:

A very blessed life in heaven with the gods is granted to those who lived a celibate life, who did injury to no one, who—I will tell you again and again—though oppressed by evil men, maintained their people under a very just government, who in life endured poverty in good spirit, who suffered martyrdom with their blood, like the ancient philosophers and those excellent men who imitated the teaching of the Omnipotent Son,<sup>47</sup> who despised the enticements of the world out of their own resources, who have compassion for the poor, who adored God, the first and the last of all things, with a most pious soul.

*Son:* Oh, blessed are those rulers of the terrestrial world, if they understand themselves and their future good.<sup>48</sup>

*Father:* Indeed.

(Quae te laetificant decies audita placebunt. Qui uitam celibem perduxerunt, qui nulli fecerunt iniuriam, qui, iterum iterumque narrabo, populos sub sanctissimo regimine seruauerunt ab iniquis oppressi, qui in uita pauperiem aequo animo pertulerunt, qui suo sanguine martyrium passi sunt ut ueteres philosophi illique uiri optimi qui Geniti omnipotentis doctiones imitati sunt, qui illecebras mundi ex se ipsis spreuerunt, qui pauperibus compatiuntur, qui illum Deum omnium rerum principem proximumque sunt animo piissimo uenerati, his uita beatissima cum diis in caelo est.

<sup>46</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 274–75.

<sup>47</sup> That is, Jesus Christ.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Georgics*, II.398–99.

*Filius:* O beatos rerum orbis terrestris praesides, si se suaque bona futura cognoscant.

*Pater:* Ne.)<sup>49</sup>

This is a most Christian message, although obviously draped in the robes of the ancient philosophers; but Gian Galeazzo's information about the heavenly spheres comes right from Macrobius's description of the characteristics of the planets in Book I of the *Commentary*.<sup>50</sup> The heavenly abode he describes is so enticing that young Gabriele wishes he had brought himself to this place much sooner, and suggests to his father that he could have done it by his own hand. Gabriele's suggestion that suicide would have brought bliss more quickly is rejected by Gian Galeazzo in an exchange that almost has an air of slapstick:

*Son:* Most holy father, if only I had known.

*Father:* What?

*Son:* That, at that time, I might have found at hand the way to that celestial kingdom.

*Father:* I hardly understand your words.

*Son:* I say, by my own [hand].

*Father:* What, by your own hand?

*Son:* Again, I say by my own [hand].

*Father:* By abstaining from forbidden touch? By administering justice? By serving the gods and the poor?

*Son:* I mean by strangling myself.

*Father:* God forbid, this way does not lead to the stars.<sup>51</sup>

*Son:* On the contrary.

*Father:* Why?

*Son:* Because [I would have come here] faster.

*Father:* You speak like the Sophists.

*Son:* What do the Sophists say?

*Father:* They turn what is right into wrong and the vice-versa.

(*Filius:* Pater sanctissime utinam scissem.

*Pater:* Quid hoc?

*Filius:* Manu uiam ad illud regnum iam diu sidereum inuenissem.

*Pater:* Vix intelligo hos sermones.

*Filius:* Dico propria.

<sup>49</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 275.

<sup>50</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.19, ed. Willis, pp. 73–78; trans. Stahl, pp. 162–68.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, IX.641.

*Pater:* Quid manu propria?

*Filius:* Iterum dico propria.

*Pater:* Abstinendo te ab illicito tactu iustitiam ministrando, Diis pauperibusque suffragia porrigendo?

*Filius:* Dico mihi iugulum properando.

*Pater:* Absit, hac uia non itur ad astra.

*Filius:* Imo.

*Pater:* Cur?

*Filius:* Nam uellocius.

*Pater:* Agis ut sophistae.

*Filius:* Quid sophistae?

*Pater:* De recto saepe faciunt indirectum et e conuerso.)<sup>52</sup>

The fatherly sermon that follows is a long fable of princely duties: if a man is given a kingdom to rule, and destroys it with fire, then surely he errs. Likewise:

*Father:* Know, then, that neither a human nor a philosopher is allowed to bring death by his own hand, unless he intends to offend that most merciful highest God, lord of all things, and take himself away from his sight, and lose that heavenly abode. He keeps the souls of the race of man, and when he wills it he will accept them and will bring the good into the community of the gods; and certainly will he thrust the wretched down to hell.

(*Pater:* Scito igitur non esse hominis neque philosophi mortem sibi manu propria inuenire, nisi quaeritet offensare illum clementissimum Deum summum omnium principem seque ab eius aspectu auferre et illam patriam amittere sempiternam. Ipse hominum generi animos impedit et cum uolet accipiet, bonos deorum consortio aggregabit, malos uero detrudet ad ima.)<sup>53</sup>

Again, the message is cast in a Christian light, but the underlying ideas come from the classical world, and again, as mediated through Macrobius, who held forth against suicide in the *Commentary*, quoting first from Plato's *Phaedo*, and then from Plotinus.<sup>54</sup> In both the Neoplatonic and the Christian formulations, the problem with suicide is that, rather than helping one to eternal life, it actually deprives the soul of its freedom by binding it more tightly to the body. Macrobius puts it this way:

<sup>52</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 275–76.

<sup>53</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 278.

<sup>54</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.13.5–20; ed. Willis, pp. 52–55; trans. Stahl, pp. 138–42.

[Plotinus] adds that death ought to be the soul's release from the body and not its bondage: that the soul that has been expelled by force is bound more tightly about the body. Indeed, this accounts for the fact that the ejected souls for a long time hover about their bodies, or their place of burial, or the ground into which the hand was thrown.

([Plotinus] mortem debere ait animae a corpore solutionem esse, non vinclum, exitu autem coacto animam circa corpus magis magisque vinciri, et re vera ideo sic extortae animae diu circa corpus eiusve sepulturam vel locum in quo iniecta manus est pervagantur.)<sup>55</sup>

This is one of the many places in which Macrobius attributes a teaching of Plotinus to Cicero (actually using Plotinus to clear up any ambiguity in Cicero); in a similar manner, Alfieri uses Macrobius to make an argument that is essentially Christian, since his understanding of the punishment for suicide is a very tangible hell.

In the third dialogue, when Gabriele talks with his uncle Bernabò Visconti, the use of Macrobius turns from the theoretical ('What is this place? Who gets to come here?') to the experience of the soul in these realms. Bernabò explains first that death is not simply a migration to another sphere, but is the separation of the soul from the body, an idea expounded upon by Macrobius, who also explains the soul can have a death of its own.<sup>56</sup> Eternal rest is given to the prince who lives up to the demands of justice, chastity, and probity, a theme also found in Macrobius:

*Gabriele:* Then do those who seek to excel among the illustrious men of the human race err?

*Bernabò:* Not at all, if they promote the good of their country, if they help the afflicted, if they abstain from the atrocities of savage slaughter, if they temper their anger and rage, if they guard peace in their age for a future generation, then they may obtain [eternal] rest.

(*Gabriel:* Errantne qui eminere inter illustres humani generis uiros quaeritant?

*Bernabos:* Nequaquam si patriae bona augeant, si afflictis subueniant, si atrocitate efferae caedis se abstineant, si spatium dent irae atque furori, si conseruiant saeculo suo pacem, si posteritati futurae quietem nanciscantur.)<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, I.13.9, ed. Willis, p. 53; trans. Stahl, p. 140. Stahl says that part of a hand was cut off before cremation and buried, p. 140 n. 13.

<sup>56</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 282; Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, I.11.4–5, ed. Willis, pp. 45–46; trans. Stahl, p. 140.

<sup>57</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 285; Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, I.8, ed. Willis, pp. 36–39; trans. Stahl, pp. 120–24.

In the sixth dialogue, speaking again with his father, Gian Galeazzo, Gabriele sees Antoniotto Adorno, the former doge of Genoa, ascending through the Milky Way, en route to a higher sphere. Antoniotto, who died in 1390/91, has been dead longer than any of the other interlocutors of the *Ogdoas*, and so knows the place better and can give Gabriele a glimpse of the geography of the heavenly spheres. Gabriele is fascinated, even enraptured, by the first sight of the old man swiftly ascending, and his father's explanations give another lesson in princely conduct:

*Son:* Most holy father, who is that old man that I see traveling through the Milky Way, which the Greeks call the galaxy,<sup>58</sup> to the upper realms, with children clad in white clothes? I do not remember to have ever seen such a man in your realm, nor in any city of Italy; yet he is Italian. What a happy disposition! How warm! How well composed! How attentive! How energetic! How nature has endowed him with every virtue! O, illustrious old man, how much vigor is in you! He was worthy to rule a great state. Tell, holy father, I beseech you vehemently.

*Father:* Indeed, I shall tell you gladly, son, since this concern torments you. Do not dwell at all on the injustices; your request is to be granted: and yet Titan will set into the Ocean faster than I might express the magnificent praise of such a leader.<sup>59</sup> [...] I suspect that the famous name of the Adorno has often reached your ears. The brother of this old man, the illustrious Giorgio Adorno, as a useful citizen headed the state, gentle to everyone. He too has distinguished progeny. Yes, the elderly man whom you see about to proceed so swiftly to the stars is named Antoniotto. He would not have been in a lower place at all than I was after my arrival in this realm if he had avoided the snares of [his] relatives. The greatest leader of the Genoese, for five unstable years he governed the state most piously; he was the terror of the Italian tyrants. How many plots of the leaders of the Florentines and of the Doge of the Venetians would have destroyed me without the advice of such a leader? Near Alessandria, in the company of French troops, he saved our state by rushing to us and fighting for us. He did not lack great frugality; he had fortitude; and he was crowned with great wisdom. A man of the people, yet when he attended to justice, a complement to the nobility. How many times did he subdue enemies!

*(Filius:* Quis, pater sanctissime, senex ille, quem per lacteam uiam, quam Graeci galaxiam uocant, ad superas sedes pueris candidis uestibus indutis ransmeare conspicio? Minime reminiscor unquam uirum tantum in tuo solio conspexisse, neque in ullis urbibus Italiae; uerum tamen Italus est. Quam hilaris animo! Quam callidu! Quam bene compositu! Quam peruigil! Quam impiger! Quam natura eum omni

<sup>58</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.4.5.

<sup>59</sup> That is, the sun will set before his glory can be told.

uirtute donauit! O senex illustris, quantus in te uigor! Dignus erat qui regeret imperium magnum. Affare, pater sanctissime, te efflagito uehementer.

*Pater:* Dicam equidem, nate libentissime, quando haec te cura remordet. Nequaquam iniusta commemoras; admittenda est flagitatio tua. Attamen Titan celerius occidet in Oceanum quam magnificas laudes tanti ducis ualeam explicare [...] suspicor Adurnorum inclitum nomen ad tuas aures saepius peruenisse. Superat rei publicae ciuis utilis, omnibus mitis, huius senis frater Georgius Adurnus, uir illustris. Hic etiam prolem habet egregiam. Senex uero, quem tam celeriter ad sidera meatuum cernis, nominatus est Antoniotus. Nequaquam me inferior fuisset post migrationem mei ad haec regna, si necessitudinum insidias euitasset. Dux maximus Ianuensium, lustris labentibus, rempublicam sanctissime gubernauit, terror erat tiramnis Italiae. Quotiens coniurationes pontificum Florentinorum ac ducis Venetorum me strauissent, ni tanti ducis suffragia peruenissent! Apud Alexandriam, Gallorum copiis nobis comitantibus, hichic nos contendendo nostramque rem publicam conseruauit. Non deerat huic duci frugalitas magna; huic fortitudo aderat; fuit mirabili sapientia redimitus. Vir popularis, nobilitati tamen ministrans iustitiae complementum. Quotiens hostes edomuit!)<sup>60</sup>

Antoniotto's ability to rise to another realm, and the omniscience that goes with that status, inspire Gabriele to want to converse with him:

*Son:* Father, might I possibly approach this man?

*Father:* What do you desire to hear from him?

*Son:* I very much want to speak to him.

*Father:* Why do you want to delay your ascent to the stars?

*Son:* I will ask him many things.

*Father:* Since he has entered the Milky Way, he has known and seen the past, the present and the future.

*Son:* I am glad that I will soon be better informed. But it is also sweet at some point to hear from another what he remembers. Will he allow me to speak with him?

*Father:* Why not? He is most dear to us; he has set foot here on this sphere not once but twice, even three times.<sup>61</sup>

*Son:* Why do I doubt? Certainly he will deign to see me.

*Father:* Who can doubt it?

*Son:* Do you want me to go?

<sup>60</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 299–300.

<sup>61</sup> This has the ring of the passage of the soul from sphere to sphere in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, although it may also be a reference to the visits of Antoniotto Adorno to the Visconti court in Milan.

*Father:* Climb up, and try to find out what you want to know quickly. He is most humane; for my sake, he will regard you favorably; perhaps he will proclaim the future to you. Today he will be added to the place of the gods; he has finished his course; proceed with a quick step. Already the heavenly realm is opening for him. Do you not see how the clouds give way and the eight circles open?

(*Filius:* Pater, possibile sit ut hunc uirum adeam?

*Pater:* Quid ex eo audire desideras?

*Filius:* Hunc affari uehementer affecto.

*Pater:* Quid celeres gradus ad sidera tardare uelis?

*Filius:* Ipse ego ipsum multa rogabo.

*Pater:* Cum ingressus est lacteam uiam, nouit atque uidit praeterita, praesentia et futura.

*Filius:* Placet, praestantius informabor. Praeterea quandoque dulce est ab alio audire, quorum meminit. Admittetne sermones meos?

*Pater:* Quidni? Nostrum amantissimus est, non semel, sed bis et ter huc ad nostrum globum gressus attulit.

*Filius:* Quid ambigo? Sane dignabitur me uidere.

*Pater:* Quis dubitare possit?

*Filius:* Vis ut uadam?

*Pater:* Gradere et scitabere quicquid uoles praesto. Humanissimus est, mei causa te libenter aspiciet, tibi forsitan futura canet. Hodie sedibus deorum aggregabitur, cursus exegit suos, tende celeri gradu. Iam sibi caeli regia aperitur. Videsne ut nubes cedant et octo circuli relaxentur?)<sup>62</sup>

In Macrobius's understanding of Scipio's dream, the Milky Way plays an important part, for that is the place where great men see the world below most clearly, and also the place where the eight circles begin, the only part that is visible to the human eye. It is also the place where great men engage each other in rational discourse about philosophical topics: 'the Milky Way, the recompense for virtuous conduct and the meeting place of blessed men' (lacteam circum virtutibus debitum et beatorum coetu refertum).<sup>63</sup> Indeed, in the dialogue that follows, the longest discussion in the work, Gabriele and Antoniotto speak about many things, including the varied races and religions of the inhabitants of Caffa, the habits of the Scythians (a description with echoes of Herodotus, but probably taken from travel narratives like the *Millioni* of Marco Polo), the legend of the

<sup>62</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 301–02. This is a reflection of the cosmology of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, as expanded by Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.5.15, ed. Willis, p. 17; trans. Stahl, p. 98.

<sup>63</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, 1.15.1, ed. Willis, p. 61; trans. Stahl, p. 149.

Wandering Jew, and, inevitably, the politics of northern Italy in the early fifteenth century.<sup>64</sup> Following their conversation, Antoniotto is finally free to proceed to the next level. He ascends with the words, 'I will fly through the galactic path to the gods, where I will have full enjoyment of eternal happiness' (Ego per galaxiam viam ad caelites volitabo, ubi perfruar beatitudine sempiterna).<sup>65</sup>

This dramatic moment is followed by the last, very short, dialogue, where Gabriele again speaks with his father. At this point, Gian Galeazzo is in a stern mood; he warns his son about what happens to those who do not ascend to the stars as they just saw Antoniotto do. He gives a fearsome description of the Underworld, Kingdom of Dis, the realm of Pluto and Proserpine, home of Cerberus and the Harpies, where the rivers Lethe, Acheron, Flegeton, and Cocitus flow.<sup>66</sup> This passage obviously draws from many famous sources, the influential accounts of the Underworld by Plato, Virgil, and Dante.<sup>67</sup> But the closest source is again Macrobius, a passage in the *Commentary* in which the torments of the damned are described in glorious detail, ending with a return to the theme of the separation of body and soul. Macrobius says:

If what the cosmologists maintain is correct, and each of us suffers his own punishment, and if we believe that the infernal regions are in our very bodies, what other attitude must we adopt than that the 'death' of the soul occurs when it is plunged into the lower regions of the body, but that it 'lives' when it escapes to the upper world after leaving the body?

(Secundum haec igitur quae a theologis adseruntur, si vere quisque suos patimur manes et inferos in his corporibus esse credimus, quid aliud intellegendum est quam mori animam cum ad corporis inferna demergitur, vivere autem cum ad supera post corpus evadit?)<sup>68</sup>

Again, Gian Galeazzo gives a Christian turn to the message, emphasizing the need for repentance and good works while still in the prison of the body:

You, whoever detain your soul here in this corporeal prison, offer succor to the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, free prisoners, seek to reconcile conflicts, and practice the works of virtue with your whole soul; do not do to others what you do not desire to be done to you; short is the pleasure of mortals, without end is [their] suffering.

<sup>64</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 302–18. For the sources of this fascinating exchange, see Weinberg's introduction to *Education, Civic Virtue, and Colonialism*.

<sup>65</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', p. 317.

<sup>66</sup> Ceruti, 'L'Ogdoas', pp. 318–19.

<sup>67</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 60–61; Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.126–29 and vi.616–17; Dante Alighieri, *La divina commedia, Inferno*, v.1–9, where the notice 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here' is posted.

<sup>68</sup> Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, i.10.17, ed. Willis, p. 45; trans. Stahl, pp. 129–30. Note the translation of 'theologis' as 'cosmologists'.

(Tu quisquis animam adhuc in corporeo carcere retines, miseris opem praebe, ieiunos pasce, indue nudos, carceratos solue, conciliare quaere discordes, quae sunt opera uirtutum toto animo et exerce, ne aliis facias quod tibi fieri non optas, breuis mortalium est uoluptas, sine fine poena.)<sup>69</sup>

Gian Galeazzo ends his last speech with a prophecy and some wishful political thinking, delivered with echoes of Dante's *Paradiso*:

I foretell these [things], to you, son, that the illustrious old man did not relate. In the year one thousand four hundred and twenty-one a cursed poverty will seize the fabric of the whole earth. Alas, the sorrow! How unhappy will that year be! The great dogal dominion of the Venetians will be diminished by water, by hunger, by the sword, and by plague. I proclaim truths to you: all of the infidel people will suffer great slaughter, with mutually inflicted wounds. The king of the Greeks will submit forever to the highest Roman pontiff. I pass over in silence Italy and Genoa, which will be sung of by the mouth of the most famous bards. These are, son, what it is now permitted that our voice tell you. Hereafter let us look to the sky, the sun, the stars and the moon, and let us impose silence over the inconstancy of the world.

(Haec tibi nate praedico quae senex illustris ille non cecinit. Anno millesimo quadringentesimo uigesimo primo execrabilis egestas totius orbis terrarum machinam occupabit. Proh dolor, infelix fuerit annus ille. Venetorum magnum ducale imperium minuetur, aqua, fame, ferro atque peste. Vera tibi denuntio: omnis infidelium gens mutuis uulneribus stragem minimam patietur. Continuo Grecorum rex parebit magno pontifici Romanorum. Taceo Italiam atque Ianuam, quae ab optimorum uatum ore canentur. Haec sunt, nate quae, nunc liceat nostra te uoce doceri. Intueamur deinceps caelum, solem, sidera atque lunam et mundi inconstantiae silentium imponamus.)<sup>70</sup>

And so, with a reference to his own time, Alberto Alfieri ends his *Ogdoas* with a 'Deo gratias' and a poem dedicating the book to his brother, hoping that it will do something to assuage his pains. In this final poem, he addresses his book:

Little book, you will go forth respected into your city, and better eyes than mine will look upon you, and you will lament my fortune, having pitied my bitter fall, and then there will be no end to tears.

(Parue libelle tuam, uenerabilis ibis in urbem, Luminaque aspicient te meliora meis, Fortunamque meam casu miseratus acerbo Flebis, nec lacrimis tunc modus ullus erit.)<sup>71</sup>

It would be fascinating to know more about the context of Alfieri's laments. For whom did he write the *Ogdoas*? What did he hope it would do for him? It is striking that a text so full of sermons about just rulers has no criticism of the

<sup>69</sup> Ceruti, 'L'*Ogdoas*', p. 319.

<sup>70</sup> Ceruti, 'L'*Ogdoas*', p. 319. Cf. Dante Alighieri, *La divina commedia, Paradiso*, XXXIII.1445.

<sup>71</sup> Ceruti, 'L'*Ogdoas*', p. 320.

murderous ways of the Visconti and does not mention by name the current duke, the monstrous Filippo Maria. Yet the fact that Gabriele Maria, the illegitimate son of Gian Galeazzo, is the protagonist of the *Ogdoas* may well be a critique of the current regime in Milan. Alfieri's choices must be deliberate, and they seem to be meant to curry favour with the Adorno, but at present we can only speculate about his motivation.

What is very evident, though, is that Alfieri used the toolbox of a teacher of grammar and rhetoric, and especially the *Commentary* of Macrobius, to build the internal context of his set of dialogues. He is most deliberate and obvious about this. In some ways it seems that Alfieri is an even worse reader of Macrobius than Macrobius was of Cicero: just as Macrobius crammed Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* into a Neoplatonic box, so Alfieri turned the world of the eight spheres into a Christian afterlife, happily mixing references to Greek deities and Christ in the same breath. The mixture of Christian and pagan themes in this particular afterlife is one of the most interesting things about the *Ogdoas*.

But beyond this, I think it is possible to see a very specific and intentional use of the macrobian matrix. Alfieri cites or alludes to Macrobius only in the dialogues in which Gabriele is speaking with his father, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, his uncle, Bernabò Visconti, and their former political ally, Antoniotto Adorno of Genoa. In dialogues four and five, where the young man speaks with his stepmother Caterina and his mother Agnese, cosmology is noticeably absent. The political and dynastic themes are very evident in these conversations, but not the enquiry into the nature of the cosmos, life and death, good and evil. We cannot say categorically that this is because women are excluded from the literature of formation of young men, since we do have one extant text in the tradition of the 'mirror of princes' from a mother to her son.<sup>72</sup> But at least Alfieri leaves the serious instruction of Gabriele, and certainly any part of that instruction that has quasi-religious themes of the rights of princes, to the men.

Perhaps this is because such cosmology is in Alfieri's mind far more pragmatic than speculative, that, in fact, the cosmos is invoked to show how a virtuous prince lives and rules. The notion that a bird's-eye view of the heavenly spheres and some panoramic omniscience about events on earth is important to shape the character of a great leader is not absent from Cicero, and is also present in Macrobius's reading of the *Somnium Scipionis*. Alberto Alfieri's *Ogdoas* shows just

<sup>72</sup> This is the Carolingian text of Dhuoda to her son William, who had been taken away from her for education as a warrior: *Dhuoda, Handbook for her Warrior Son: Liber Manualis*, ed. by Marcelle Theil Àbaux (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

how pragmatic this tradition can be. Alfieri is steeped in the cosmology Macrobius elaborates from Plato and Cicero, the swirling realm of the heavenly spheres, ruled by the planets, where the souls of the just move from level to level: but Alfieri is able to cheerfully pick and elaborate on the parts of this cosmic vision that work best for his real purpose in the *Ogdoas*, the articulation of the characteristics of the just ruler on earth.

# AVARICE AS A PRINCELY VIRTUE? THE LATER MEDIEVAL BACKDROP TO POGGIO BRACCIOLINI AND MACHIAVELLI

Cary J. Nederman

The condemnation of avarice (or its synonym, greed) and its corrosive social effects formed a hallmark of European ethical thought throughout the Middle Ages. Aristotle had roundly condemned *pleonexia*, greediness or avarice, in his moral and political writings, which were to exercise vast influence from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards.<sup>1</sup> In this, Aristotle was fully supported by the later Latin classical and Christian traditions; for the latter, as Richard Newhauser has demonstrated, the spread of avarice was often regarded to be a sign of impending apocalypse.<sup>2</sup> In particular, kings and other persons in positions of power — ecclesiastical as well as secular officials — were advised to eschew pursuits that might lead them to value material gain over the moral and spiritual duties to which they were assigned.<sup>3</sup> Yet these pieties fit somewhat uncomfortably with the social realities of Europe after 1100: the growing

<sup>1</sup> David Harris Sacks, 'The Greed of Judas: Avarice, Monopoly, and the Moral Economy in England, ca. 1350–ca. 1600', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 28 (1998), 263–307 (pp. 268–75).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Newhauser, 'Avarice and the Apocalypse', in *The Apocalyptic Year 1000*, ed. by Richard Landes, Andrew Gow, and David C. Van Meter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 109–19. See also Richard Newhauser, *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> This formed a salient theme of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* (completed in 1159), the first half of whose subtitle, *De nugis curialium*, framed the opening three books of the volume. See John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, trans. by Cary J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 3–11.

monetization of the economy, the expansion of all forms of trade, the availability of luxury goods — in short, the ‘commercial revolution’ about which Robert Lopez and other economic historians have written.<sup>4</sup> As Hans Baron and Lester K. Little both tried to argue, albeit in different ways, it took a considerable period of adjustment for social and moral ideas to ‘catch up’ to the emergent economic trends.<sup>5</sup> For some recent scholars, the congruence between economic conditions and theoretical reflection did not occur until ‘the well being of the political nation or state’ came to be identified with ‘economic prosperity [...] in the seventeenth century’.<sup>6</sup> Regardless of the precise chronology, the break is generally viewed as a decisively modern one.

Two indications of the development of a moral code consonant with the new economic realities of commercial society have sometimes been located in Poggio Bracciolini’s *De avaritia* (1428/29) and Niccolò Machiavelli’s *Il principi* (1513/14). Each tract, while a classic of the Italian Renaissance, poses its own enigma. In the former treatise, written in dialogue form, Poggio places in the mouth of one of his characters, Antonio Loschi, a defence of greed as a quality worthy of the greatest princes, inasmuch as it produces social and political good for subjects and communities. His view has been taken, alternatively, as a serious expression of so-called ‘economic humanism’ or as a stinging critique of the hypocrisy of the voluntary poverty teachings of the Mendicant orders.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, Machiavelli’s account of how the ‘self-made’ ruler must be *misero* in order to retain his position as head of state is widely interpreted either as a forthright analysis of the means for successful governance or as a ‘subversive’ attack on the conventional standards of virtue associated with monarchical rule.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The germinal work is Robert S. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950–1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). More recently, see Jean Favier, *Gold and Spices: The Rise of Commerce in the Middle Ages*, trans. by Caroline Higgitt (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Hans Baron, *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism*, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), I, 158–257, and Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 101–02. For a similar view developed and defended more extensively, see Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> See Maria Luisa Pesante, ‘Il commercio nella repubblica’, *Quaderni storici*, 35 (2000), 661–64.

<sup>8</sup> Contrast Russell Price, ‘The Theme of *Gloria* in Machiavelli’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 30 (1977), 621–24, with Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), I, 135.

Commentators have ordinarily regarded Poggio and Machiavelli as innovators: against the background of commonplace arrangements of the virtues and vices, they engage in the transformation of condemnable vice into praiseworthy virtue. The present paper argues, however, that neither Poggio nor Machiavelli was so highly original as scholars deem. Rather, by investigating later medieval theories of monarchy, including the work of such important figures as Nicole Oresme and Christine de Pizan, we find that Poggio and Machiavelli constitute, at best, a crystallization and distillation of emerging trends during the fourteenth century. As medieval theorists of kingship placed greater emphasis on the material conditions and consequences of effective rulership, they were led to reorder and revalue the traditional classification of principal virtues in a manner consonant with the goals of administrative success in the context of a commercializing economy.

### *Wealth and Greed in Poggio and Machiavelli*

Although the once-dominant view of *De avaritia* as in fact valorizing the unbridled accumulation of wealth has been rejected by scholars,<sup>9</sup> Poggio's ability to martial a considerable array of evidence favouring the positive value of greedy or self-interested behaviour is itself startling. The tract, composed in the form of a dialogue based on the Academic principle of sceptical dispute,<sup>10</sup> is divided into three major sections: a statement by the character Bartolomeo de Montepulciano on the evils of avarice, a response in support of the opposing position by Antonio, and a refutation of the contrary case by Andrea of Constantinople (assisted by Bartolomeo). The middle section, which concerns us at present, opens with an encomium of greed that recounts the many 'excellent men' in all walks of life who have evinced avarice. Not least among these are rulers: 'kings and princes, whose virtue shown forth brightly, were avaricious [...] I would not be ashamed to be counted a member of that group where there are so many kings'.<sup>11</sup> On the basis of authority alone, avarice should be praiseworthy.

<sup>9</sup> See Benjamin G. Kohl's introduction to the translation of *De avaritia* in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. by Kohl and Ronald G. Witt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), pp. 234–35. Translations in the present essay are from this version, which is based on the text printed by Riccardo Fubini in Poggio's *Opera omnia*, 4 vols (Turin: Erasmo, 1964–69), I, 2–31.

<sup>10</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 256.

<sup>11</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 257.

Yet Poggio's Antonio does not for the most part rely on example, moving instead to the construction of arguments based on reason to defend the morality of greed. He starts with human nature: 'almost all men will be judged' greedy, since 'everything we undertake is for the sake of money and we are all led by desire for gain, and not a small profit either'. Antonio sees the connection as an occupational one. Regardless of the profession in which one labours, 'everything we treat, work at, or undertake is directed at getting as much profit as possible [...]. If you were to remove that profit, all business and work would cease, for who ever undertakes anything without hope of it?'<sup>12</sup> Even the most liberal and learned of professionals — lawyers and physicians, philosophers and theologians — do not shun the quest for income; priests who say otherwise are simply hypocrites.<sup>13</sup> 'You can review every profession, whether intellectual or manual', Antonio remarks, 'and you will not find one that is immune from inborn greed.'<sup>14</sup> Those who disparage money in fact disrespect all of the arts and sciences by which the human race has distinguished itself and improved the condition of the world.

What is the connection between nature and the desire to accumulate money? Antonio argues that human beings are in fact afflicted by fundamental insecurity in the face of physical scarcity and discomfort: 'nature has instilled an instinct for survival in all living creatures; for this reason, we seek food and whatever else is necessary for the care and nurture of the body.'<sup>15</sup> We are able to achieve this goal most efficiently when each occupation in the community performs its own appropriate function and when the fruits of these various labours are exchanged. Money is the medium by which this is facilitated, and hence 'money is very advantageous, both for the common welfare and for the civic life'.<sup>16</sup> Since it is money that both purchases the necessities by which people are sustained and permits the efficient transfer of goods necessary for the public utility, anyone who opposes the passion for money opposes the natural order:

All alike take pleasure in money and wealth [...] for no other reason except that nature has formed and taught them to buy whatever maintains and nourishes life. Therefore, since nature urges and exhorts everyone to follow this desire, avarice should not be condemned.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 257.

<sup>13</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, pp. 257–58.

<sup>14</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 258.

<sup>15</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 259.

<sup>16</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 258.

<sup>17</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 259.

The person born without the desire for profit is the true monstrosity, for he lacks the instinct to seek his own survival through the acquisition of a materially sufficient life.

Thus, avarice is the true foundation of human community, according to Antonio. 'What are cities, states, provinces, and kingdoms, if you carefully consider it, if not the workshops of avarice?', he asks.<sup>18</sup> The person who would produce only the bare minimum of 'necessities for himself and his family' is the selfish one; mercy and charity would go out the window, since generosity and liberality would be impossible if there were not excess. More importantly, civilization would decline precipitously without the hard work of those who desire to enhance the material sufficiency of their lives.

We need those who are fitted for the preservation of the human race. If no one exerted himself to work for anything beyond his own needs, all of us here, not to mention others, would be forced to become farmers. [...] Every splendor, every refinement, every ornament would be lacking. No one would build churches or colonnades; all artistic activity would cease, and confusion would result in our lives and public affairs if everyone were satisfied with only enough for himself.<sup>19</sup>

Public authorities ought not to discourage avarice, then, but to promote it as a firm and fixed aim of all laws and policies.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the wise government would seek 'to bring together many avaricious men in the cities to serve as a kind of private storehouse, which could be used to aid any of us while the funds would be managed privately. Money is necessary as the sinews that maintain the state'.<sup>21</sup> Suppressing avarice by legal means or informal sanctions is highly detrimental to the public good.

Not surprisingly, then, Antonio praises rulers who manifest an avaricious character. 'Look at kings and princes', he proclaims. 'What do you find in them except the public proof of a significant, not small, degree of avarice?'<sup>22</sup> Avarice does not prevent kings from attaining valour and from enjoying illustrious 'memory, fame, [and] reputation' for their glorious deeds. In fact, greed only enhances the standing of princes, because 'avarice is not considered a vice, but a virtue; the richer a man is, the more he is honored'.<sup>23</sup> The avaricious ruler will seek

<sup>18</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 260.

<sup>19</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 260.

<sup>20</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, pp. 262–63.

<sup>21</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 263.

<sup>22</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 261.

<sup>23</sup> *The Earthly Republic*, p. 261.

to promote the wealth of the community as a whole — and hence, its fiscal well-being — which constitutes its natural and fitting purpose. There is a sort of mutuality, then, between the avarice present in a state and that present in its ruler: the money-loving king will do all that he can to ensure that his subjects may act upon their own avaricious proclivities, in order that he will be able to garner more for his own coffers. The better off his subjects are financially, the better off he will be. Likewise, the ruler who despises wealth and discourages its acquisition will not merely impoverish and dishonour himself, but will also reduce his subjects to squalor and misery.

Machiavelli similarly, if more famously, engaged with the problem of greed in his *Il principi*.<sup>24</sup> Like Poggio, he deemed the desire for material improvement to be a feature of human nature. 'For this may be said of men generally, that they are', among other qualities, 'eager for gain' and they are, moreover, 'excessively self-interested [or bad, *tristi*]'.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to Poggio, however, he takes these traits to be axiomatic and engages in no extensive explanation of how or why they exist.<sup>26</sup> Rather, Machiavelli's concern is to ensure that the factor of widespread human greed receives sufficient accounting as rulers make important decisions about their own conduct. Machiavelli clearly believes that previous analysts of political affairs have adopted a far too sunny, and thus unrealistic, attitude toward the moral orientation of human beings, namely, that most people can be counted upon to guide their conduct in accordance with the conventional precepts of moral virtue. As a consequence of this overly optimistic assessment, rulers have been brought down by their failure to recognize that 'how men live is so different from how they should live'.<sup>27</sup> In particular, the effective and successful ruler — the

<sup>24</sup> I leave aside the question of whether Machiavelli really had an economic *theory* embedded in his thought. On this topic, see Roland M. Begert, *Elemente einer politischen Ökonomie im Werke Machiavellis* (Bern: Haupt, 1983), and Nachoem M. Wijnberg and Claudine de Zoeten-Darnset, 'From Prince to Teacher: The Machiavellian Transformation of the Role of the State in the Economy', *Yearbook of European Studies*, 8 (1995), 179–86. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury*, concentrates only on Machiavelli's republicanism and concludes that Machiavelli's legacy (combated in the eighteenth century) was one of opposing the accumulation of wealth on the grounds of its corrupting effects on civic virtue (pp. 109, 155).

<sup>25</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. by Quentin Skinner, trans. by Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 59. The Italian text is, of course, widely available; Price's translation is based on the edition by Sergio Bertelli (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1960).

<sup>26</sup> On the linguistic and conceptual structure associated with self-interest in Machiavelli's writings, see Russell Price, 'Self-Love, Egoism, and *Ambizione* in Machiavelli's Thought', *History of Political Thought*, 9 (1988), 237–61.

<sup>27</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 54.

one who ‘maintains his state’ — must be mindful of the human inclination toward greed in two ways. First, princes must take into account their own tendencies toward acting avariciously and must discern how to control such traits to their ultimate benefit. Second, rulers must learn how to manipulate the greed of subjects in order to assure that obedience and deference to power will occur.

The first issue pertains primarily to the way in which a prince shapes his public reputation. Customarily, people have supposed that rulers should be ‘generous’, not ‘miserly’ (Machiavelli stresses that he uses the word *misero* ‘because *avero* [avarice] in our tongue also signifies someone who is rapacious, whereas we call *misero* someone who is very reluctant to use his own possessions’).<sup>28</sup> The generous or ‘liberal’ ruler is caught in a dilemma, however. In order to be well regarded for his liberality, he must spend his own resources lavishly and will inevitably impoverish himself. To retain his reputation for generosity, then, ‘he will eventually be compelled to become rapacious, to tax people very heavily, and raise money by all possible means’.<sup>29</sup> Ironically, the perpetuation of his liberal ways induces the prince to behave just as an avaricious man would. It is far better, Machiavelli concludes, for the ruler to engage in conduct that people judge to be miserly: ‘he will not have to rob his subjects; he will be able to defend himself; he will avoid being poor and despised and will not be forced to become rapacious. For meanness [*parsimonia*] is one of those vices that enable him to rule’.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, Machiavelli seems to think, miserliness is no vice at all, but instead an indispensable expression of princely *virtù*, that is, the set of traits that Machiavelli believes will render a ruler fully qualified to maintain his state and achieve glory. ‘It is shrewder to cultivate a reputation for meanness, which will lead to notoriety but not to hatred’, Machiavelli concludes. ‘This is better than being forced, through wanting to be considered generous, to incur a reputation for rapacity, which will lead to notoriety and to hatred as well.’<sup>31</sup> Machiavelli reasons that greed in a prince is not what it appears to be: the man who might be deemed too avaricious to spend his wealth on his friends and retainers in fact proves most generous to his subjects and thus will not incur their hatred (and opposition). Avarice in this sense is good, because it does not lead to rapacity in the name of generosity. Of course, it goes without saying that the miserly prince will also possess more wealth that he may spend on himself (or simply hoard) at this own discretion.

<sup>28</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 55.

<sup>29</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 56.

<sup>30</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 57.

<sup>31</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 57–58.

The reason that rapacity leads to hatred among the populace at large, in turn, is that a prince's subjects are prone to greed themselves. The ruler needs to keep this always foremost in his mind as he governs. Machiavelli advises the prince to refrain 'from laying hands on the property of his citizens and subjects [...]. Above all, he must not touch the property of others, because men sooner forget the killing of a father than the loss of their patrimony.'<sup>32</sup> This is one of Machiavelli's few ironclad rules of governance (he usually talks in terms of probabilities and tendencies). The ruler must be keenly aware that the temptation to seize property runs counter to the general human inclination toward greed, and this readily generates the kind of hatred that leads to widespread and deep opposition to his regime. The problem is magnified, and thus extremely dangerous for the maintenance of the state, because there are so many opportunities for a prince to behave rapaciously and so many pretexts for the confiscation of private property.<sup>33</sup>

Machiavelli recognizes that the logic of greed runs in the reverse direction as well. In acknowledgment of his subjects' desires for material well-being and gain, the prince who encourages the wealth of his people earns their loyalty and obedience. Hence, Machiavelli advises the ruler to

Encourage the citizens to follow quietly their ordinary occupations, both in trade and agriculture and every other kind, so that one man is not afraid to improve or increase his possessions for fear that they will be taken from him, and another does not hesitate to begin to trade for fear of the taxes that will be levied. Rather, he should offer rewards to anyone who wants to do such things, and to anyone who seeks in any way to improve his city or country.<sup>34</sup>

This passage, which receives relatively little attention from Machiavelli scholars, echoes many of the points raised by Poggio's Antonio. The promotion of various commercial or productive schemes realizes the common benefit of the entire city or country by enhancing the quantity or quality of its denizens' material life. But people, being naturally inclined to avarice, will only engage in such activities — and incur the risks involved — if they see some potential for their personal profit. A ruler who fails to take cognizance of this tendency toward greed on the part of his subjects will govern a poor domain, and hence will have fewer resources on which to draw when he requires finance or other forms of support in case of a military or domestic emergency. By contrast, the prince who permits his people to act on their desires of self-aggrandizement — and who, indeed,

<sup>32</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 59.

<sup>33</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 59–60.

<sup>34</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 79.

rewards the fruits of avarice — ensures to himself and to his realm a greater measure of wealth, and thus a larger public treasury on which to draw.

Both the speech of Poggio's Antonio and Machiavelli's *Il principi*, then, evince an attitude toward avarice that scholars who study the history of economic ideas would deem to be quite modern in bearing.<sup>35</sup> Avarice is not a vice to be uprooted by spiritual and legal authorities because of its supposedly corrosive effects on social order and tranquillity. Quite to the contrary, greed is a perfectly natural phenomenon that results in the improvement of the physical circumstances of human existence. Rulers who understand this reality benefit themselves and their countries by harnessing greed for political ends. Kings and officials who try to outlaw avarice engage in a self-defeating and self-destructive — not to mention unnatural — policy. This general position sounds quite at odds with the conventional pieties of classical and Christian morality that were broadly upheld in medieval Europe. Yet some medieval authors had begun to recognize that the accumulation of wealth by individuals and communities was a worthy goal, and that the constraints of traditional morality in the economic sphere required loosening. Thus, the positions articulated by Poggio and Machiavelli in fact represent extensions of doctrines that already enjoyed currency during the later Middle Ages. We can see this by briefly surveying writings by Nicole Oresme and Christine de Pizan.

### *Nicole Oresme*

A scholastic thinker of the first order, Nicole Oresme has been rightly heralded for his intense interest in economic matters as reflected, especially, in the composition of *De moneta*, a treatise on the origins and nature of money that he completed between 1356 and 1360. Aristotle (and most medieval Aristotelians) largely dismissed the acquisition of monetary wealth as an end-in-itself, since those engaged in making money generally come to see it as inherently desirable, rather than as a means to achieving some other good. Aristotle had regarded wealth as at best instrumental to leading a life of leisured civic virtue, in which the citizen concentrates on political rule and moral action over and above the pre-political life of acquiring necessities (*oikonomia* in its original and literal sense). Oresme, however, argues that money 'is well-suited for intercourse among a large

<sup>35</sup> See Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

number of human beings, and the use of it is good in itself'.<sup>36</sup> The ambivalent (and sometimes downright hostile) sentiments toward trade and commerce that one finds in much Christian scholastic literature, as in Aristotle's writings, are not evident in *De moneta*. When Oresme expresses reservations about economic enterprise, they are directed against practices demonstrably detrimental to the public welfare, which is the intended result of exchange relations.

Since trade impacts directly on the common good for Oresme, it should hardly be surprising that he identifies the enabling medium of money as the property of the community, rather than of the ruler. Oresme stresses this point throughout *De moneta*. Although the ruler is assigned responsibility for the actual minting and regulating of the money supply, he is to be considered merely an executive agent of the community, deputed to realize the public good of sound currency and equitable exchange. The dominant theme of Oresme's treatise is the communal ownership, and thus ultimate control, of money.<sup>37</sup> From this principle follows the advice of *De moneta* about the debasement of coinage as well as the broader contours of its political theory. Since the community requires money in order to engage in a full range of economic activities, and hence to promote the good of its individual members, the very idea that coinage pertains to the private patrimony of a ruler is excluded from the start. As a result, the Crown is strictly prohibited from manipulating the coinage in order to profit itself or its intimates.

Implicit in the ascription of money's ownership to the community is an economic conception of the common good itself. In more conventional strains of medieval Aristotelianism, the terms associated with the common good (*utilitas*, *bonum*, *commodum*, *iustitia*) tended to be defined in terms of the promotion of virtue and religious conviction among members of the community. Hence, good government was understood to be rulership consonant with ultimate moral principles, whereas bad government, or tyranny, was synonymous with the governance of citizens in a manner inconsistent with their ethical and spiritual improvement.<sup>38</sup> At times, Oresme draws upon this traditional moralistic distinction between 'true kingship' and 'tyranny' in explicating the difference between well-ordered and evil government.<sup>39</sup> But his examples of just and unjust rule are

<sup>36</sup> Nicole Oresme, *De moneta*, ed. and trans. by Charles Johnson (London: Nelson, 1956), p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> Oresme, *De moneta*, pp. 10–11, 16–17, 39–42.

<sup>38</sup> See Cary J. Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes in the Christian Political Thought of Medieval Europe: From the Fathers to the Fourteenth Century', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*, 57 (2004), 525–51.

<sup>39</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 42.

invariably couched in terms of the economic impact of a government's actions. Thus, in explaining why manipulation of the value of currency by a ruler is unjust, he draws an analogy to political interference in agricultural markets: 'It would be like fixing a price for all the grain in his kingdom, buying it, and selling it again at a higher price. Everyone can clearly see that this would be an unjust exaction and indeed tyranny.'<sup>40</sup> The value of the economic goods within a community can only be established in the first instance by voluntary exchanges among individuals.

Oresme's account of the communal ownership of currency, with its concern for the public advantages of trade, does not, however, license the unlimited accumulation of money or unrestrained pursuit of profit. While, in a sense, individuals qua individuals own wealth (and its monetary representation), their economic activities are subject to regulation according to standards of the public good. In this connection, Oresme invokes what appears to be a conventional Aristotelian prohibition on activities such as usury and money-changing (*campdoria*).<sup>41</sup> Yet even his analysis of these supposedly 'unnatural' economic transactions is tinged with a practical, rather than merely moralistic, orientation. Having soundly condemned both usury and money-changing on the predictable grounds that they are incompatible with the true purpose of money — namely, to facilitate the exchange of produced goods — Oresme nonetheless refuses to prohibit them unconditionally: 'Yet sometimes from necessity or advantage some vile business, such as the art of money-changing, or some evil one, such as usury, is permitted.' These enterprises (like the maintenance of 'public houses of prostitution') may be sanctioned in order to avoid a greater evil or scandal within the community.<sup>42</sup>

Oresme invokes this utilitarian claim in order to draw a direct contrast with the debasement of money by rulers, an activity for which he can find no valid warrant. Indeed, he characterizes 'making profit by the mutation of money' as 'even worse than usury', since at least the usurer's client consents to the transaction, whereas currency manipulation 'is less voluntary and more against the will of subjects, incapable of profiting them, and entirely beyond necessity'.<sup>43</sup> The criteria of volition is central to Oresme's case:

<sup>40</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 16.

<sup>41</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', pp. 25–27.

<sup>42</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 29.

<sup>43</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 28.

And inasmuch as the usurer's interest is not so excessive, nor so generally prejudicial to the multitude, as this [debasement], which is imposed deceitfully as well as tyrannically against and upon the whole community, so I wonder whether it should better be termed violent robbery or fraudulent exaction.<sup>44</sup>

The usurer-borrower relationship remains (barely) tolerable insofar as it involves a voluntary agreement between parties. By contrast, debasement is nonconsensual and therefore constitutes an act of force committed by the ruler upon the community. The volitional standard, one of the hallmarks of just economic exchange, disappears in the manipulation of currency, rendering the king-community relation an unequal and coercive one. The community becomes instead 'enslaved' economically to the private interest of its government,<sup>45</sup> as well as impoverished to the extent that 'the amount of the ruler's profit is necessarily the same as the community's loss'.<sup>46</sup>

*De moneta's* main objection to debasement (and presumably other claims of governmental economic privilege, such as public monopolies, which Oresme also opposes)<sup>47</sup> therefore stems from the economic impact upon the community. An unjust policy employs coercive means to detract from the communal wealth in order to enhance the income of those who wield political power. Debasement precipitates the economic decline of the republic in a number of ways, which Oresme describes in careful detail, based on his observations of events that 'have lately been seen to occur in the kingdom of France'.<sup>48</sup> First, an unstable currency is ruinous for all manner of trade. Imports cease, since 'merchants *ceteris paribus* prefer to travel to those locales in which they may obtain good and certain money'. In similar fashion, 'the business of internal commerce in such a kingdom is disturbed and impeded by such changes' of currency, while fixed incomes are thrown into flux and 'cannot be properly and justly valuated and taxed'. Moreover, debased currency destroys the system of credit upon which commercial activity relies. In sum, inasmuch as 'merchants and everything else mentioned are either necessary or extremely useful to human nature', alterations of coinage 'are prejudicial and harmful to the whole civil community'.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 28.

<sup>45</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', pp. 40, 43, 47.

<sup>46</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 24.

<sup>47</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 16.

<sup>48</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 30.

<sup>49</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 33.

In addition, debasement has a debilitating effect upon the good order of the community. On the one hand, some individuals (other than the ruler himself) profit exorbitantly from changes in the money supply. Oresme mentions not only moneychangers and their ilk, but also royal intimates and their friends, who engage in a medieval version of 'insider trading' by taking advantage of the advance knowledge they possess about the future occurrence of debasements.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, debasement disadvantages those 'parts of the community [that] are occupied in business honorable or useful to the whole republic', such as 'men of the church, judges, soldiers, farmers, merchants, craftsmen and the like'.<sup>51</sup> These people are denied the ability to make an adequate livelihood, since so many of the agreements into which they enter depend upon the presumption of sound currency. Oresme contends that the members of such occupations, 'who are the best parts of the community, are impoverished (*depauperantur*) by this' mutation of coinage; 'the ruler in this way punishes and excessively burdens the larger and better [section] of his subjects.'<sup>52</sup> Ultimately, the economic condition of the kingdom is rendered chaotic and turbulent: computation of expenditures and receipts becomes impossible, lawsuits and disputes over payments multiply, and outright fraud and abuse run rife.<sup>53</sup> Unreliable currency produces a multitude of negative material consequences and inequities far beyond the simple injustice of a ruler profiteering from his role as minter of the coinage and regulator of its value. A monarch prone to monetary manipulation not only harms his own reputation and honour, but also destroys the economic foundations of his realm, upon which he relies for his ordinary revenues, and demoralizes the subjects who are a direct source of his own wealth and well-being.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, Oresme even darkly hints, in a manner echoed by Machiavelli, that the ruler who introduces the many evils associated with monetary manipulation endangers the hold on the kingdom enjoyed by his dynasty. Referring explicitly to the situation in his own nation, Oresme observes that the 'free hearts of Frenchmen' will not stand to have slavery thrust upon them; and the French royal house, 'bereft of its ancient virtue, will without doubt forfeit the kingdom'.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 34.

<sup>51</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 33.

<sup>52</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 34.

<sup>53</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', p. 35.

<sup>54</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', pp. 30–31.

<sup>55</sup> Nederman, 'Imperfect Regimes', pp. 46–47.

### Christine de Pizan

A generation after Oresme, the Italian-born and French-domiciled author Christine de Pizan also displayed considerable awareness that one of the main purposes of political community is the physical well-being and, indeed, material improvement of its members. This is evident in several of her major political treatises, including *Le livre de la cité des dames*, *Le livre des trois vertus*, and *Le livre de corps de policie*. In the latter work, she declares that the ruler must gage his policies and their implementation so as to 'increase and multiply the virtue, strength, power, and wealth of his country'.<sup>56</sup> This list of the central aims of government — especially the inclusion of an economic goal — is more extensive than one is likely to find in most of Christine's sources, for whom the king was generally charged preeminently with promoting moral and religious rectitude above all else. Of course, Christine avers that wealth ought not to translate into conspicuous consumption and luxury; one of her standard pieces of advice to men and women of those social classes that possess discretionary income is to abstain from exorbitant expenditures on clothing and other finery.<sup>57</sup> In fact, she even advocates that the state should design its taxation policies so as to discourage excessive patterns of consumption and display of wealth.<sup>58</sup> Yet she acknowledges that the accumulation of wealth by the various orders of society is a worthy pursuit, and she realizes that government plays a crucial role in the ability of individuals to achieve this aim.

Christine's strikingly economic conception of community and governance is especially evident in the detailed attention she pays to the lives of merchants, artisans, and labourers, as well as to their relation with the king. She demonstrates considerable sympathy both for the contributions made by the 'humbler' classes and for the plight arising from their varied tasks. She insists that burghers and men of commerce are not to be disdained, at least if they are honest and knowledgeable in the conduct of their affairs.<sup>59</sup> The merchant class is very necessary, and without it neither the estate of kings and princes nor even the polities of cities

<sup>56</sup> Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, trans. by Kate Langdon Forhan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 36. A new edition of the French has been produced by Angus J. Kennedy, *Le Livre du corps de policie* (Paris: Champion, 1998).

<sup>57</sup> Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the Three Virtues*, ed. by Madeleine Pelter Cosman, trans. by Charity Cannon Willard (New York: Penguin, 1989), pp. 174–76, 189–90, 195. The original text has not been edited; its sole complete exemplar is found in Boston Library, MS 1528.

<sup>58</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Three Virtues*, p. 195.

<sup>59</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 104.

and countries could exist. For by the industry of their labour, all kinds of people are provided for without having to make everything themselves, because, if they have money, merchants bring from afar all things necessary and proper for their lives.<sup>60</sup> Christine's commendation of merchants is noteworthy, in particular, for its assumption of the importance of the economic well-being of citizens. Traders provide an extremely useful social service, permitting a more efficient use of labour than would be otherwise possible. 'It is very good for a country and of great value for a prince and to the common polity', she maintains, 'when a city has trade and an abundance of merchants.'<sup>61</sup> Such persons 'in many countries are held in high esteem' on account of 'the good they do for everyone'.<sup>62</sup> Christine holds that all classes benefit when commercial society is permitted and encouraged to flourish.

In similar terms, Christine praises craftsmen and peasants, since 'if the republic excluded laborers and artisans, it could not sustain itself'.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, she defends both groups against the ignominy that is heaped upon them. She remarks, 'Although some think little of the office of the craftsmen that the clerics call "artisans", yet it is good, noble, and necessary'; likewise, 'the estate of the simple laborer or others of low rank should not be denigrated, as others would do [...]. The estate of the poor which everyone despises has many good and worthy persons in purity of life.'<sup>64</sup> Again, Christine reasons from the necessity of the activities performed by artisans and day labourers for meeting the physical needs occasioned by human existence to the conclusion that their work must be valued by society. 'The varied jobs that the artisans do are necessary for the human body and it cannot do without them [...]. [Labourers] support the body of every person with their labor. They do nothing that is un-praiseworthy.'<sup>65</sup> One's material contribution to the physical sustenance of the community is thus to be factored heavily into the determination of social inclusion. Judgements may be made about how well individuals perform in their diverse offices, but no office in and of itself is to be demeaned or disdained if it contributes a vital function to the material welfare of the community.

<sup>60</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 103.

<sup>61</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 104.

<sup>62</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, pp. 103–04.

<sup>63</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 105.

<sup>64</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, pp. 105, 108, 109.

<sup>65</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, pp. 106, 107.

The main burden of responsibility falls upon the prince, in turn, to ensure that the economic condition of the realm is maintained and enhanced, as well as to oversee the efficient coordination of the tasks necessary for the survival of the body politic. Christine declares that the ruler ought to

desire that his subjects perform their best in whatever office God has placed them [...]. Each one, whatever his rank, ought to live by good policy, without extortion or overcharging, so that each may live properly under him [the prince], and that they love him as a good prince ought to be loved by his people.<sup>66</sup>

A central duty of royal government, then, is to uphold the legal and social structures that permit private economic relations between individuals, that is, to protect against force and fraud. The king is not to interfere with (or micromanage) the daily performance of economically necessary activities, but he is to guarantee that nothing interrupts or deflects subjects from doing such tasks. This implies, moreover, that the ruler must be familiar with the various duties necessary to the health of the body, and must be cognizant of the conditions of the lesser estates:

He ought to hear sometimes about the common people, labourers, and merchants, how they make their profit from the poor and the rich, and similarly all kinds of things, so that his understanding is not found ignorant of anything that can be virtuously known.<sup>67</sup>

In this way, the prince will appreciate fully the contributions that the lower orders make to the health of the realm and will be prepared to guide and govern them knowledgeably and competently.

Most importantly, perhaps, the king must understand how the consequences of his own policies and their implementation by his officials impact the economic conditions of his realm. For example, Christine points out how soldiers 'pillage and despoil the country', leading directly to economic hardship on the part of the rural poor, because they are inadequately compensated by government. 'If soldiers were well paid', she observes, 'one could restrict them on pain of punishment to take nothing without paying for it, and by this they could find provisions and everything that they needed economically and plentifully.'<sup>68</sup> Likewise, the king must weigh the consequences of his taxation schemes. Christine does not deny the legitimacy of taxing subjects to meet public needs. But he must be guided by the principle of gathering only 'the legal revenue that it is reasonable to collect and take from his country, without gnawing to the bone his poor

<sup>66</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 40.

<sup>67</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 17.

commoners'.<sup>69</sup> Christine objects, in particular, to the inequities of royal taxation policies, which exempt the rich while burdening the poor disproportionately. It is not simply that such schemes are unjust, but that they have materially deleterious effects upon those who are already impoverished:

There are some who come to pay this money imposed on them and then they and their poor household starve afterwards, and sell their beds and other poor possessions cheaply and for nothing. And it would please God if someone informed the king and noble princes.<sup>70</sup>

The ruler must realize that his own actions may directly harm the material well-being of his subjects, which in the end will only redound to his own injury, since the people's despoilment means that the realm itself will become impoverished and will generate less income in the future. Christine takes it as axiomatic that wise 'princes would rather be poor in a rich country, than to be rich and have plenty in a poor country'.<sup>71</sup> This is not merely a moral principle; it reflects a doctrine that naturally follows from her economic conception of communal order and royal virtue.

Christine reinforces her belief in the economic foundations of communal order in the *Cité des dames*, where she proposes the claim that most of the arts and civilized forms of labour — indeed, organized society itself — were feminine in origin. She provides a lengthy accounting of 'the earthly benefits accruing thanks to women [...] who gave the sciences and arts to the world'.<sup>72</sup> Among 'the arts, manifested in manual works of labor', invented by women, Christine includes: weaving, extraction of olive oil, cart construction, metalworking, cultivation, tool-making, and gardening.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, she ascribes to Ceres the formation of communal association amongst human beings who had previously lived as beasts. Adapting a widely employed account of social origination, derived from Cicero's *De inventione*, Christine recounts how Ceres,

Had the people of that time gather together in communities. They had traditionally lived scattered here and there in the forest and wilderness, wandering like animals. She taught them to build cities and towns of permanent construction where they could reside together.

<sup>69</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 19.

<sup>70</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 20.

<sup>71</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the Body Politic*, p. 22.

<sup>72</sup> Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, ed. and trans. by Earl Jeffrey Richards (New York: Persea, 1982), p. 142. Richard's translation is based on London, British Library, MS Harley 4431.

<sup>73</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, pp. 71, 73–77.

Thus, thanks to this woman, the world was led away from bestial living conditions to a rational, human life.<sup>74</sup>

Moreover, Christine contends, Isis did likewise in Egypt.<sup>75</sup> Hence, woman are to be credited with many (perhaps most) of the major achievements in the development of human culture and the improvement of the species' material circumstances and comfort. Without women's innovations and contributions, she implies, humanity would have remained in a state of physical depredation and misery.

Christine admits that some thinkers may not view the material development of the human race as a laudable accomplishment. 'Several authors', she observes, 'have argued that this world was better off when people lived only from haws and acorns and wore nothing more than animal skins.' She takes strong exception with such authorities, however, on the grounds that the physical improvement of humanity ultimately enhances the worship of God:

With all due respect [...] for those who argue that it is unfortunate for the world that such things were discovered for the ease and nourishment of the human body, I would maintain that the more goods, favors, and boons the human creature receives from God, the better he is required to serve God.<sup>76</sup>

Living a materially adequate existence is not inconsistent with the divine plan, but is instead the realization of those capacities and faculties that God has granted to humanity:

Hence, the condition of the physical body and those works that provide creature comforts for it are not to be disdained but appreciated and promoted. The improvement of agricultural techniques and of diet, for instance, confer upon human beings more beautiful and radiant bodies and stronger and more flexible limbs, for this food is more beneficial and useful for humans [...]. By organizing men to perform field labor, this woman [Ceres] made it possible for so many cities and towns to be populated and for their residents, who perform the other works necessary for life, to be supplied.<sup>77</sup>

As in Christine's other writings, the *Cité des Dames* finds nothing contemptible in those economic activities that aid in meeting the needs of the body. To the contrary, 'God has wished to provide the world with many necessary and profitable things [...] through these women'.<sup>78</sup> Coping with physical necessity is

<sup>74</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, p. 76; the Ciceronian exemplar is *De inventione* 1.1–3.

<sup>75</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, p. 77.

<sup>76</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, p. 82.

<sup>77</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, p. 79.

<sup>78</sup> De Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, p. 81.

part of the divinely ordained human condition for Christine, and those who have contributed to the development of arts which improve material life are deserving only of ovation. In turn, the right and fitting duty of government should be the protection and promotion of those activities and functions that contribute to the maintenance of human biological well-being. This doctrine runs through a range of Christine's writings.

### Conclusion

Oresme and Christine were not particularly unusual or extreme in their recognition that the mechanisms for promoting the material wealth of the nation formed part and parcel of princely virtue. Examples from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries could be multiplied many times over. Marsiglio of Padua during the early fourteenth century had realized the individual *commodum* (material self-interest) constituted the basis of community.<sup>79</sup> In the 1460s, the English lawyer and political theorist John Fortescue proclaimed that the king

is set up for the protection of the laws, the subjects, and their bodies and goods, and he has power to this end from the people [...] no people ever incorporated themselves into a kingdom by their own agreement and will, unless in order to possess safer than before both themselves and their own, which they feared to lose — a design which would be thwarted if a king were able to deprive them of their means, which was not permitted before to anyone among men.<sup>80</sup>

Admittedly, none of these authors is quite prepared to state explicitly and unambiguously that avarice is a virtue — either of men in general or of princes more specifically. Yet the basic logic supporting just that claim — that the pursuit of worldly riches is a legitimate goal for individuals and communities alike, and that a good or just ruler will hence manage his realm so as to accrue a maximum quantity of wealth — leads us to just such a conclusion. When Poggio and Machiavelli stepped toward proclaiming greed to be in effect good — or at least not a vice to be mercilessly stamped out — they were making not a radical break with the medieval past but an intellectual move very much in line with preceding trends of European social and political thought.

<sup>79</sup> See Cary J. Nederman, 'Community and Self-Interest: Marsiglio of Padua on Civil Life and Private Advantage', *Review of Politics*, 65 (2003), 395–416.

<sup>80</sup> John Fortescue, *On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. by Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 23.

A further methodological point about the transformation of moral and political languages is also suggested by the foregoing study. There has been a pronounced tendency among recent scholars who have reflected on this topic to emphasize changes in terminology or discourse as the only true tokens of intellectual or conceptual change. Adherents to the German *Begriffsgeschichte* approach not less than proponents of the so-called 'Cambridge School' seem to me to be prone to this claim by their almost pathological concentration on the mapping of historical continuity and change in certain keywords. Such a constrained focus on language may be deceiving, however. As we have seen above, one might easily be fooled into supposing that a radical shift of paradigms accompanied the revaluations of avarice and greed detectable in Poggio's and Machiavelli's writings. Yet those alterations appear less extreme when set against the late medieval backdrop that I have proposed; they look more like culminations of long-standing traditions than decisive breaks with the moral and political thought of the past. The deployment of language is, of course, an important tool for the intellectual historian, but it cannot and should not replace the more difficult work of exploring and exposing the assumptions and conceptual framework that underlie texts and the ideas they propose. I do not mean this to constitute a call for a return to the 'unit idea' approach that Skinner rightly criticized long ago. But I do think that the mania for a wholly linguistic methodology — stimulated by analytic philosophy as well as by the 'linguistic turn' in so much Continental philosophy — has ill-served the study of the history of ideas. I hope that the understanding of how avarice came to be viewed as a 'princely virtue' in Western European thought affords an example of how a more full-blooded methodology enriches the practice of intellectual history.

## RE-ENVISIONING THE SAINT'S LIFE IN UTRAQUIST HISTORICAL WRITING

Joel Seltzer

In the year 1517, a close observer of Prague city life describes the festivities that marked the feast day in honour of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague:

On Sunday on the vigil for Master Jan Hus and Master Jerome of Prague, God's martyrs, after morning Mass, as well as on the Monday of this holiday, the Prague City Council had a bonfire lit on the small island under the bridge near the cross; on the bridge tower the trumpeters trumpeted and the drummers drummed in celebration; on the bridge they shot from harquebuses, and by the mills they shot from the ramparts towards Petřín Hill. Lord Mayor Zikmund of Tvář, with Lord Jan Hlavska and several other lords were on the bridge tower looking down on the bonfire below. On the bridge and on the banks of the Vltava throngs of people gathered. But the lord canons on the Castle were none too pleased.<sup>1</sup>

The magistrates of Prague, surveying their domain from their tower perch, had reason to look on the festivities with contentment. After a century of political turmoil and violence, the city's fortunes looked bright. King Vladislav, who had once attempted a Catholic restoration of the realm, had recently died, leaving behind a young and absent heir. A pact of toleration between Catholics and Utraquists had held for many years. A simmering economic feud with the country nobility had been patched over. Most importantly, the Old Town and the New Town, which once had fought pitched battles against each other, were now making preparations to tear down their fortifications and merge into one great

<sup>1</sup> Prague, National Museum, MS III B 12, fol. 260<sup>v</sup>. Excerpts published in František Palacký, *Staré letopisové čeští* (The Old Czech Annalists) (Prague: Nakl. České společnosti nauk, 1829) (repr. in *Dílo Františka Palackého* (The works of František Palacký), ed. by Jaroslav Charvát, 2 vols (Prague: Mazáč, 1941–45), II, 341). Subsequent references to Palacký's work are to the much more accessible reprint. All translations are mine.

metropolis. It only seems natural that the burghers would celebrate the day of their blessed saints with blaring trumpets, blazing guns, and joyous throngs.

There was more to this day of joyous celebration than meets the eye, however. The very notion that a day should be set aside to honour a saint, much less one executed as a heretic by a full council of the Catholic Church, was a matter of no small controversy in the lands of the Czech Crown. As the chronicler tells us, the Catholic canons of St Vitus Cathedral, looking down from the castle ramparts, were dismayed by the festivities across the river, and this was not only due to the celebratory shooting of heavy guns in their general direction. Catholic clerics had been complaining about the commemoration of St Jan Hus since 1416, when the canons of the Olomouc Cathedral informed the prelates at the Council of Constance that the people were commemorating the two Czechs recently burned on the banks of the Rhine. Their complaints had little effect. Soon, liturgical books were adding rites in honour of the martyrdom of Jan Hus and Jerome on 6 July, institutionalizing this new feast day.<sup>2</sup>

The advocates of reform in Bohemia were themselves debating whether any mortal, even a great hero like Jan Hus, was worthy of veneration. Czech theologians called into question feast days, pilgrimage, saintly intercession, the cult of relics and images, and all the other aspects of the cult of saints, around which so much of late medieval religious life revolved. Matěj (Matthias) of Janov, the fourteenth-century Paris-educated Czech cleric, called for a spiritual life centred on weekly or even daily communion and considered devotion to saints to be an obstacle to a wider Eucharistic devotion. Jakoubek of Stříbro, the Prague priest and theologian who restored the practice of giving the wine to the laity during the Mass, in defiance of Constance, in 1414, also believed that the Eucharist should replace the cult of sacred images in the affections of the laity, although he never rejected outright the cult of saints, the Sacraments, intercession, and purgatory.<sup>3</sup>

Radical Hussites took a much more strident stance against saints, relics, and sacred images than the revered masters Matěj and Jakoubek.<sup>4</sup> Accusations of icon

<sup>2</sup> David Holec, 'O felix Bohemia — O felix Constantia: The Liturgical Commemoration of Saint Jan Hus', in *Jan Hus: Zwischen Zeiten, Völkern, Konfessionen*, ed. by Ferdinand Seibt (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997), p. 390.

<sup>3</sup> Ota Halama, *Otázka svatých v České reformaci — její proměny od doby Karla IV. do doby České konfese* (The question of the saints in the Czech reformation — its transformations from the age of Charles IV to the time of the Czech Confession) (Brno: Marek, 2002), pp. 12–17.

<sup>4</sup> The word *Hussite* was originally used as a term of opprobrium, coined by the opponents of the Bohemian Reformation. Hence, it is used in this text sparingly, and only because no better term exists as a shorthand for all of the various strands of the Czech reform movement. This

oclasm were raised against the Hussites as early as 1414. At his trial in Constance, Jerome of Prague was accused of preaching against sacred images, of scattering relics at a Carmelite church, and of inciting others to smear crucifixes with excrement at monastery churches.<sup>5</sup> Although Jerome denied these charges, the spectre of iconoclasm and the dishonouring of saints was clearly a new threat that Hussite radicalism brought before the church hierarchy. In 1419, with the outbreak of revolutionary violence, this threat became a reality as rampaging mobs from the Prague New Town and the countryside tore up church altars, looted sacred images, assaulted monks and nuns, and burned down monasteries. Episodes of iconoclastic violence recurred again in 1421.

The destruction of images was a very limited phenomenon. For the most part, both Hussite moderates and radicals removed sacred images from churches rather than destroying them.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the radical wing of the Hussite movement, centred around the south Bohemian town of Tábor, took a firm line against saints and their accoutrements. In 1424 the Taborite leaders convened a synod in Klatovy, in south-west Bohemia. There, a number of decrees were promulgated in order to differentiate the Taborite position from that of the Prague moderates. While the Praguers held that saints help the faithful and therefore should be beseeched for intercession, the Tabor priests maintained that there is no scriptural basis for invoking their intercession. The Klatovy synod also strongly de-emphasized the role of feast days. While Prague preserved the observance of feasts for ancient saints and martyrs along with feasts for Jesus, Mary, and the apostles, the Taborites decreed that only feast days for those saints attested in the New Testament should be observed. Furthermore, in the Taborite view, the observance of the saint's day was to consist in attending sermons on the Gospels and the saints. It was not meant to be an opportunity for idleness and sin — the Taborites did not prohibit work on feast days, and even encouraged it. Finally, at Klatovy the Taborite priests, unlike their Prague counterparts, firmly and definitively rejected the doctrine of purgatory.<sup>7</sup>

labelling conundrum is largely resolved in 1434 with the defeat of the radical reformers at the Battle of Lipany. From that point on, the dominant reform group will be referred to using the neutral term *Utraquists*.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 252.

<sup>6</sup> Halama, *Otázka svatých*, pp. 53–55.

<sup>7</sup> Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 500–16. This list of decrees, responding to a similar list

The survival of the cult of saints in Hussite Bohemia was not ultimately determined through learned disputation but by force of arms, when the party of Tábor was defeated by a coalition of nobles and Prague Utraquists on the field of Lipany in 1434. Following Lipany, until his death in 1471, the archbishop-elect of Prague, Jan Rokycana (never confirmed in his position by the pope), guided the Utraquist Church on questions of faith and practice. Rokycana placed himself firmly in the tradition of Jakoubek of Stříbro. He did not oppose the cult of relics and images outright, but he sought to limit their popularity since he saw them as impediments to Eucharistic devotion. Likewise, he condemned those who honoured the saints more than Christ, and he reminded his auditors and readers that saints alone had absolutely no power to forgive a person his sins. Nevertheless, he did not oppose saints, relics, and images outright, only their emphasis in contemporary church practice at the expense of a devotion centred on Christ.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, by the later fifteenth century, a middle ground was forged for saints in Bohemia. The iconoclasm that marked the outbreak of radical Hussitism quickly disappeared, but the practice of pilgrimage to saints' shrines or churches famed for their relic collections also fell into decline.<sup>9</sup> The Utraquist liturgical calendar remained largely undifferentiated from the Roman, although some of the saints who offended Utraquist sensibilities were excised from the books.<sup>10</sup> A notable example was St Dominic, whose mendicant followers led the crusading armies into Bohemia. The sixth of July was dedicated to St Jan Hus, but no miracle stories were circulated about Hus; he did not appear to people in visions or dreams, and pilgrims did not flock to his birthplace. Indeed, no proper hagiographies were written of Jan Hus or Jerome of Prague. When, in 1495, a Czech translator of the *Golden Legend* wanted to incorporate the stories of Hus and Jerome into his work, he simply used eyewitness accounts of their final days. These accounts lack any hint of the miraculous and bear little resemblance to contemporary hagiography.<sup>11</sup>

made previously by Prague Hussites, was circulated in Latin and Czech and served as the basis for Taborite doctrine for years to come.

<sup>8</sup> Halama, *Otázka svatých*, pp. 58–60.

<sup>9</sup> Halama, *Otázka svatých*, pp. 66–67. Rokycana's successor, Václav Koranda, Jr, wrote polemics against pilgrimage, as well as sacred images and relics, while virtually ignoring the issue of saints and intercession.

<sup>10</sup> Holeton, 'O *felix Bohemia*', p. 389.

<sup>11</sup> Z. V. Tobolka, *Kališnický pasionál z roku 1495* (An Utraquist passionnal from the year 1495) (Prague: Monumenta Bohemiae typographica, 1926). The material on Hus and Jerome comprise

And so it remained throughout the tenure of Rokycana: saints and their cults were not banished from his Utraquist Church organization, nor did they flourish. The living saint, a central figure in the religious life of late medieval communities, was nowhere to be found in Bohemia during the long years of Rokycana's tenure as head of the Utraquist Church. Rokycana died in February 1471, within one month of the death of the 'Hussite' king, George of Poděbradý, who had for so long protected and nurtured the Utraquist Church. The death of these two seminal figures led to a change in the power dynamic, both in the spiritual and secular realms. The new king, Vladislav Jagiello, son of the Polish king, was a Catholic, and although he agreed at his election to uphold Utraquism, he did not make things easy for supporters of the chalice. At the same time, with Rokycana's death, the last great figure from the heroic age of the Hussite Revolution was gone, and new heroes had to be conjured up — heroes who would hold the line against Vladislav's assaults and who would prove the continued viability and strength of the Utraquist Church. In a word, the Utraquist Church of the late fifteenth century needed saints.

### *Utraquist Hagiography and the Old Czech Annals*

One of our most important sources for the history of Prague and the Utraquist movement in the fifteenth century and early sixteenth century is a sprawling collection of urban chronicles, which collectively have been called the 'Old Czech Annals'. The Annals date back as far as the fourteenth century and were still being compiled well into the sixteenth. The authors of the Annals represent various strands of the Bohemian Reform movement, although by and large they reflect the interests of the more conservative Prague Utraquist hierarchy. The annalists were not, however, overly concerned with theological disputes. Their gaze was fixed firmly on issues of concern to the Czech-speaking laity. A thorough reading of the Old Czech Annalists gives the impression that these authors saw it as their duty to make sense of the profound changes in Bohemian religious, political, and economic life, and to provide their readers with the proper point of view to take concerning the pressing issues of the day.

a supplement, placed at the end of the book, after the index. The book was sold to Catholics without the supplement, but with no other changes. According to Tobolka (p. 5), the Czech translation also reduced the number of miracle stories found in the original in order to suit Utraquist tastes.

It is in manuscripts containing these Annals that we find the only known Utraquist hagiographies. The hagiographies comprise mini-narratives, termed by Czech scholars 'relations', which were embedded within the larger chronicle narratives.<sup>12</sup> The authors of these 'relations' do not appear to be the chroniclers themselves, but perhaps close associates of the 'saint' whose cause they were promoting. Like all hagiographers, they wrote their accounts to persuade the public of their subject's holiness. The 'relations' were then inserted wholesale, in a suitable chronological spot, into different versions of the Old Czech Annals. The hagiographies that we will consider made their way into the Annals between 1480 and 1520,<sup>13</sup> well after the death of Jan Rokycana. Thus, although one hagiography concerns a priest who died back in the earliest years of the Hussite Revolution, we should consider these works as reflections on Utraquist thinking about saints and saint's lives in the post-Rokycana era, after 1471.

Finding a suitable saintly model for the would-be Utraquist hagiographer was a considerable challenge. Traditional models of sanctity were abandoned in favour of new ways of describing and defining sainthood. For example, the many saints in the late medieval Latin world who came from the ranks of monks, nuns, and the mendicant orders were to find no welcome among the Utraquist faithful. Monks were implacable foes of the Hussites, who destroyed monasteries across Bohemia in the fifteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Mendicants, who led the effort to crush the reform movement both through their preaching and their crusading, were loathed by the Utraquists. No follower of Francis or Dominic was going to become a popular object of veneration among those devoted to the chalice.

<sup>12</sup> According to the editors of an anthology of Hussite literature, these 'relations' (*relace*) were a special kind of Hussite historical propaganda, meant to be read at a public gathering such as a diet. This claim appears to be purely speculative. *Výbor z české literatury doby husitské* (Selections from Czech literature of the Hussite period), ed. by Bohuslav Havránek, Josef Hrabák, Jiří Daňhelka (Prague: Československé akademie věd, 1963), p. 478.

<sup>13</sup> Dating of manuscripts and the texts they contain is naturally an inexact science. Wrocław University Library, MS M1306, which records the vita of Jan Želivský, has been dated by one scholar to 1488. R. Heck, 'Czasy Karola IV. we wrocławskim rękopisie Starych Latopisów Czeskich', *Sborník prací filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity*, 27 (1980), 49–52. Prague, National Museum, MS IV E 28, which records the vitae of Michal Polák and Jan Bechyňka, is dated to 1518, based on a colophon. Naturally, the colophon dates the manuscript, not the ur-text, which could quite plausibly be older.

<sup>14</sup> Josef Macek, *Víra a zbožnost jagellonského věku* (Faith and piety in the Jagellonian era) (Prague: Argo, 2001), pp. 200–22.

Throughout Europe, charismatic laywomen such as Catherine of Siena and Birgitta of Sweden were among the most popular saints of the later Middle Ages. Their devotion to the Eucharist would seemingly have made them appropriate models for Utraquist sanctity. This, however, was not the case, perhaps because women saints were so frequently associated with their Dominican and Franciscan spiritual directors, who recorded their visions and wrote their hagiographies.<sup>15</sup> Despite the many women who played active roles in the early years of the Bohemian reform, we have no recorded example of a female Utraquist saint.<sup>16</sup>

In the place of the typical late medieval saints, such as monks, nuns, friars, and laywomen, Utraquist saints promoted by the Old Czech Annals were plucked almost without exception from that much maligned religious category, the parish priest. What made these humble priests saints? Medieval saints were, by definition, miracle workers, but Utraquists considered miracle workers and the cult of relics that they spawned to be superstition. Could one be a saint without performing miracles? This was a central quandary facing the Utraquist hagiographers of the later fifteenth century.

How was this quandary resolved? All saints imitate Christ in some manner. Many late medieval saints imitated Christ by intense, self-inflicted suffering, but few were able to achieve the ultimate sacrifice of martyrdom, as much as they may have longed for it.<sup>17</sup> This option was, however, open to Utraquist saints, and martyrdom became the standard by which sanctity was measured in the Utraquist Church. Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague achieved sainthood primarily by means of their martyrdom at the hands of the Council of Constance. To their ranks were added the numerous Hussite priests and laymen who were tossed alive into the deep mine shafts of Kutná Hora. Martyrdom was the ultimate *imitatio Christi*, and it had the additional bonus of linking the Utraquist Church with

<sup>15</sup> John Coakley, 'Gender and the Authority of Friars: The Significance of Holy Women for Thirteenth-Century Franciscans and Dominicans', *Church History*, 60 (1991), 445–60.

<sup>16</sup> Women were enthusiastic supporters of the Bohemian reform from the origins of the movement. Pious burgher wives as well as reformed prostitutes flocked to the preaching of Jan Milič and Jan Hus, and formed associations dedicated to spiritual renewal. Noblewomen and queens patronized reforming preachers and protected them in times of danger. Cross-dressing women were even rumoured to have fought with the Taborite hosts. John Klassen, 'Women and Religious Reform in Late Medieval Bohemia', *Renaissance and Reformation*, n.s., 5 (1981), 203–21.

<sup>17</sup> Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 30: 'Dying for the faith became a frontier phenomenon in the West, a real possibility only for Crusaders or, from the thirteenth century, for mendicant missionaries in the Middle East, Asia, or northern Africa.'

the primitive church of the pre-Constantinian era. Like those early Christian martyrs, the Hussite martyrs infused tremendous strength into their besieged followers and admirers. As Brad Gregory writes about martyrs of the sixteenth century, 'Any compromise could unfold only 'over their dead bodies' and the memory of their refusal to submit'.<sup>18</sup>

Martyrs were critically important to bolstering the Hussite movement, which constantly faced pressure, both externally and internally, to compromise with Rome. Yet martyrdom alone did not necessarily confer sainthood in Reform-era Bohemia. The first Hussite martyrs were university students, executed by the lords of the Old Town in 1412. Their crime was to disrupt the sale of indulgences at three of the main churches in Prague. They were spurred to action by a learned disputation at the university concerning indulgences and subsequent preaching by Hus at the Bethlehem Chapel. The chronicler describing this event tell us that after the executions the students' corpses were wrapped in white sheets and carried in procession to the Bethlehem Chapel for a funeral ceremony. Along the way, one Master Jičín 'began to sing the responsory with a joyful voice: 'Isti sunt sancti', which is sung for holy martyrs'.<sup>19</sup> In the following days, protesters gathered outside the Old Town Hall and Hus preached on the worthiness of the three 'martyrs'. Yet there is absolutely no suggestion in the Old Czech Annals or elsewhere that these martyrs, summarily executed for acting on their strongly held beliefs, were considered objects of veneration in heaven. The three students were anonymous figures — despite achieving martyrdom, they lacked certain qualifications that were to become necessary in the creation of Utraquist saints.

What were these qualifications? Like Hus and Jerome, the new saints were priests and leaders of the reform community of Prague. Parish priests were placed front and centre by the Utraquist movement, for two reasons. First, only the priests could provide the Eucharistic bread and the wine to the laity. It was their job to put the cult of the Eucharist into action. Furthermore, the second critical component of the Bohemian reform was regular preaching of the word of God, in the vernacular — a function performed by priests (although the most radical Hussite streams encouraged lay preaching). The Utraquists, and the Hussite movement generally, had the effect of thrusting the ordinary parish priest into the forefront of religious life, after centuries of playing second fiddle to reforming monks and friars.

<sup>18</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu novočeským pravopisem* (The Old Czech Annals from the Wrocław Manuscript using modern Czech orthography), ed. by František Šimek (Prague: Historický spolek, 1937), p. 11. Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 36.

The hagiographies also emphasized the leadership role of the parish priests as a necessary component of sanctity. Parish priests, along with the university masters, were on the front line of the battle with Rome to reform the church. They were crucial to the fight and, what is more, they were in short supply. The fact that the Utraquists, unlike the more radical Taborites and later, the Unity of Brethren, were never willing to break the apostolic succession in the consecration of priests meant that a shortage of priests was an endemic problem. As long as the papacy was unwilling to consecrate an Utraquist bishop, prospective Utraquist priests had to travel abroad to find a sympathetic or bribable bishop, or a foreign bishop had to be brought to Bohemia, as happened on two occasions.<sup>20</sup> Such a difficult and dangerous job required some inspirational models.

Two other related qualities are characteristic of Utraquist saints. First of all, they had to demonstrate heroic patience and fortitude in the face of persecution, as further proof of the righteousness of their cause. And just to make absolutely certain what this cause was, the Utraquist saint was required to testify to his beliefs in a public forum. In other words, the model for Utraquist sainthood was Jan Hus, who had bravely testified to his faith before the Council of Constance. Hot-headed university students, like those killed secretly by the Prague town council in 1412, need not apply.

### *The Case of Jan Želivský*

Of the hagiographies found in the Old Czech Annals, the most controversial candidate for sainthood has to be Jan Želivský, parish priest of the church of Mary of the Snows in the Prague New Town. Želivský was a fiery preacher whose sermon on 30 July 1419 instigated the first Prague Defenestration, in which an angry mob, after ransacking a nearby Catholic church, entered the New Town Hall, threw the town councillors out of a window and slew with swords, spears, and clubs those who survived the fall. This event led directly to the revolutionary period of the Bohemian Reformation, a time in which townsmen and peasants fought side by side with noblemen to keep foreign crusaders and a hostile king

<sup>20</sup> The Utraquists initiated a major reduction in the number of priests and other church officials, reducing the financial burden that the clerical class placed on the laity. This eased, but did not eliminate, the shortage of priests, as is made clear by references to this problem in the Old Czech Annals. See, for example, *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického* (The Old Czech Annals from the Křižovnický Manuscript), ed. by František Šimek and Miloslav Kaňák (Prague: Odeon, 1959) pp. 289, 318. See also Macek, *Víra a zbožnost jagellonského věku*, pp. 118–38.

out of the kingdom. Prague at this time was divided into two camps: the radical reformers associated with Tábor controlled the New Town, while the conservative party, supported by the university masters, controlled the Old Town (a third camp, noblemen, sometimes royalists, controlled the Castle across the river). From his influential pulpit, Jan Želivský soon came to wield power over the affairs of the New Town, belittling the basic Hussite tenet that priests not hold secular power. From this New Town base, he attempted to extend his authority into the Old Town.

In March of 1422, the Utraquist mayor and captain of the Old Town, fearing Želivský's encroaching powers, lured him into their stronghold, the Old Town Hall, and quickly arrested and executed him along with a number of his priestly supporters. The Old Czech Annals contain two accounts of Želivský's confrontation with the mayor, his arrest, and execution. The first account, which is found in manuscripts composed in the mid-fifteenth century, is unsympathetic to Želivský, focusing on the riots which followed the news of the priest's execution, and the revenge killings of prominent citizens.<sup>21</sup>

The second account is a 'relation', presented as an eyewitness account by one of Želivský's associates, a priest who claims to have been present at his death yet inexplicably was spared execution. This relation is neither found in the oldest manuscripts of the Annals, nor in any other manuscripts that can be dated to the time of Želivský's death. It has been preserved in four manuscripts of the Old Czech Annals (G, I, R, T), the earliest of which (R) dates from the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the account has an *aura* of authenticity. It is unusually detailed, filled with directly reported speech and a blow-by-blow account of the day of martyrdom. It is possible that it was originally penned soon after the events it describes, intended as propaganda designed to persuade its readers and hearers that Želivský was unjustly killed and that his killers needed to be brought to justice.<sup>23</sup> However, by the end of the fifteenth century, when the

<sup>21</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, pp. 39–40. *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, pp. 73–74.

<sup>22</sup> Prague, National Library, MS XXII A 1 (Text G), MS XIX C 19 (Text I), MS 95 fond Osek (Text T), Wrocław University Library, MS M 1306 (Text R). Since Palacký's 1829 edition, the different manuscripts of the Old Czech Annals have been identified by the uppercase letters A–Z, as well as by a few lowercase letters.

<sup>23</sup> Evidence for this position is presented in some versions of the Annals. The 'relation' account of Želivský's death is followed by a list of accusations made by one of Želivský's supporters against the leading priests of Hussite Prague, and the accusations seem to fit together with the relation. This document appears to be contemporary because it is hard to explain why such a list

'relation' found its way into our manuscripts, this original context would have been lost. Without context, the account simply appears to tell of the martyrdom of a brave defender of the chalice, even though in this case both sides — murderers as well as martyrs — were firm defenders of the lay chalice, and the dispute was in fact a political one.

Our eyewitness narrator reports that, along with Želivský, twelve fellow priests (a number which clearly frames the hero's death in apostolic terms) were arrested and summarily sentenced to death. As the only priest present who was not to die that day, the narrator heard all their confessions. While speaking with each, he made a point of asking them whether they had any regrets about their Utraquist leanings:

I asked each of them individually, 'Dear Brother, it is now a matter of your life; and many have suspected that you would have some doubts concerning the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ'. And they answered me saying: 'No, dear brother! Even today we took communion with the body and blood of our dear Lord Jesus Christ and with this, God grant it, we will die happy'.<sup>24</sup>

Viewed logically, this passage is nonsensical. As priests, these martyrs had every right to the chalice. But the Annals are not meant to be read in a sophisticated manner. Priests or no, they were persecuted as Utraquists. Taking the chalice during their final communion was an act of bravery and defiance.

The account suggests that if the priests had just abjured the chalice, they might have saved their lives. 'It is a matter of your life', the confessor reminds each priest. Again, this choice is nonsense, for in 1422 all sides in Prague agreed on frequent communion in both kinds! Certainly in 1422 the lords of the Old Town would not have beheaded thirteen priests for nothing more than giving the wine to the laity. This is clear evidence that even if this relation of Želivský's death was written soon after the events described, it was reworked much later. For, by the time this story first makes its way into the Old Czech Annals, sometime after 1480, openly propagating the chalice from the pulpits of Prague could have been cause for martyrdom. It was at this point that the young Czech king, Vladislav Jageillo, son of the King of Poland, turned his back on the Utraquist allies who had placed him on the throne and began the persecution of those who refused obedience to Rome. During this period of Catholic restoration, priests and laymen who openly

of accusations would be drawn up decades after those listed were all dead. *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, pp. 43–44; *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, pp. 79–81.

<sup>24</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, pp. 42–43; *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, p. 77.

supported the chalice were subject to torture, imprisonment, and martyrdom, as will be discussed in the following case, that of the priest Michal Polák. For this reason, by the 1480s, openly testifying to belief in Utraquism was a necessary precondition of the martyr's death, and hence this twist was added to the story of the judicial murder of Želivský and his associates.

Of the thirteen martyrs, only Želivský is given a name and an independent identity. Although we know him from other sources as a master of political manipulation and inflammatory rhetoric,<sup>25</sup> here he is portrayed as a brave, other-worldly representative of the common people of Prague. As a parish priest, he repeatedly expresses concern for his flock. Standing before the mayor and captain (*hejtman*) of the Old Town he warns them: 'do not seize people's homes, vineyards or other things which were given to them by the great community assembly [*velka obec*].'<sup>26</sup> Before he died, he encouraged his confessor to keep up the spirits of the common people, the 'poor wretches', as he called them, who would be demoralized by the loss of their leader.

When the executioners arrived, Želivský led his disciples to the chopping block. He openly gave thanks to God that he be allowed to suffer, and then 'without any fear bowed his head under the sword'.<sup>27</sup> The executioner, so moved by Želivský's piety, was not able to carry out his duties, and asked for his aid: 'Dear priest Jan, give me your hands that I might bind them, for otherwise I cannot carry this out.' The priest, meeting his fate like a lamb at the slaughter, or perhaps more willingly, freely complied, and with the martyr's hands bound behind his back, the executioner proceeded with his job.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> The conservative, yet most reliable, of all Hussite chroniclers, Vavřinec of Březová paints Želivský in these terms in the 'Hussite Chronicle'.

<sup>26</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, p. 41; *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovníckého*, pp. 75–76. Redistribution of monastic land as well as property of exiled Catholic burghers was a contentious issue of the time. Želivský's apparent support for a distribution favouring the commoners makes it clear why he was such a favourite of the Communists.

<sup>27</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, p. 43; *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovníckého*, p. 77. Interestingly, the narrator admits he was not present at the actual place of execution: 'Then those who were there further relate [...]' (Pak dále praví, ktož sú byli [...]). This appears to be another touch of authenticity (i.e., the narrator was not at the execution, but he was present prior to that moment), but considering the blithe continuation of directly reported speech, it appears rather to confirm the mythic nature of the account.

<sup>28</sup> *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, p. 42; *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovníckého*, p. 77.

A description of Želivský's funeral follows the execution.<sup>29</sup> Želivský's helper and successor, the priest Jakub, read the account of the death of the Protomartyr Stephen from the Acts of the Apostles (6. 8–8.1). Stephen, like Želivský, was the victim of secret plotting by city elders who seized him and set false witnesses against him. Although Stephen spoke openly and truthfully, his accusers shut their ears against him and stoned him to death. The narrator tells us that priest Jakub finished his reading with the words, 'Devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him.' As Jakub finished his oration, bedlam broke out in the church. 'The people were so sorrowful that several were carried from the church half dead and several went mad from sorrow and lay ill on the benches.' Priest Jakub had masterfully turned Želivský's death into a living passion play. Jakub explained to his audience how Želivský, like Stephen, was martyred for his devotion to Christ's word. The leaders of the Old Town imitated perfectly the cruel antagonists of St Stephen, shutting their ears against the truth. And the mourners, on cue, wailed uncontrollably at the funeral, demanding Želivský's canonization alongside Stephen and the other martyrs. 'Let the Lord God be praised through the ages', the narrator concludes, 'that he spread the renown of the Czech land by means of such a martyr.'<sup>30</sup>

Whether or not Želivský was considered a saint by his hagiographer or others is a question open to interpretation. He is given the appellation 'martyr' (*mučedlník*) rather than saint. Hitherto, martyrs were saints almost by definition, but these terms were to be sundered during the Reformation and clearly the terms were in flux in Utraquist practice. There is no known evidence that Želivský was venerated in the liturgy or in popular practice, or that he served as an intercessor. On the other hand, he is directly compared to St Stephen in a sacred drama performed in his own parish church, which indicates that at least one reteller of his death wanted to make Želivský a saint. What is clearer is that patterns in the telling of Želivský's final days are repeated in the hagiographies of later figures openly acknowledged as saints. The priest and his disciples had to testify openly to their unwavering commitment to Utraquism. He had to defend bravely his position in the face of death and greet his martyrdom with dignity and even joy. No miracles accompanied his death, which is perfectly in keeping with Utraquist philosophy. The martyr Želivský may not have been venerated as a saint interceding for believers, but he established a pattern for martyr-saints that followed.

<sup>29</sup> The funeral does not appear in Text R, the Wrocław Manuscript. It does appear in Text G, the Křižovnický Manuscript, as well as Text I.

<sup>30</sup> *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, p. 79.

### *The Case of Michal Polák*

Michal Polák ('The Pole') was a parish priest who came to Prague from his native Poland in his youth, studied at the university there, briefly returned to his homeland to be ordained, and then came back to Bohemia to serve under Jan Rokycana. After Rokycana's death, Michal served as the spiritual leader of two of the most significant reform parishes in Prague, the Týn Church in the Old Town Square, the centre of Prague Utraquist life, and the St Giles Church in the Old Town, which made him, *ex officio*, one of the leaders of the Utraquist hierarchy.<sup>31</sup>

According to one account in the Old Czech Annals, Michal helped pave the way for the coronation of his fellow Pole, Prince Vladislav, to the Bohemian throne, which was left vacant at George of Poděbradý's death in 1471.<sup>32</sup> But good relations with the King, his compatriot, were not to last. Vladislav was put on the throne by the Utraquists and kept there during the long war against the Bohemian Catholic lords and Matthias Corvinus, the Catholic king of Hungary, but he remained committed to the Church of Rome. Soon after a peace treaty was signed in 1479, Vladislav abandoned his old allies and strove to suppress the Utraquist hierarchy. A controversy that broke out over the public singing of antipapal Czech songs gave the King the opportunity he sought to crack down. The song was banned and those who continued to sing it in Prague and in Kutná Hora were arrested. Prominent townsmen in both cities were jailed and tortured, and some died under torture.<sup>33</sup>

Vladislav then had four of the leading Prague priests arrested, most prominently Michal Polák. As in the case with Želivský, the story of Michal's arrest and death is told twice, once as a short account that appears in numerous manuscripts, the second as a full-fledged *passio*, a 'relation', purportedly written by an

<sup>31</sup> F. M. Bartoš, 'Dvě studie o husitských postilách' (Two studies on Hussite postils), *Rozpravy Československé akademie věd*, 65 (1955), 68–82, provides biographical information on Michal Polák, much of which derives from a letter written by Michal in 1476.

<sup>32</sup> Prague, National Museum, MS IV E 28 (Text K), fol. 222<sup>r</sup>, reads, 'priest Michal, parish priest from St Giles, a vigorous and outspoken preacher, was a major reason that Vladislav became king in Bohemia, and how he repaid him afterward!' See also Palacký, *Staří letopisové čeští*, p. 189.

<sup>33</sup> Text K, fol. 221<sup>r</sup>; Text O (Prague, National Museum, MS V E 89), fol. 240<sup>r</sup>. The song, 'Faithful Christians' (Věrní křesťané) was said to include verses directly calling the pope 'anti-christ'. See also Palacký, *Staří letopisové čeští*, pp. 188–89. Palacký's text is not very reliable at this point. The salient facts are accurately reported, but the texts have been rearranged and the most incendiary lines have been omitted.

eyewitness narrator and inserted into Texts K and M of the Annals.<sup>34</sup> In this case the eyewitness narrator was one of the four priests arrested with Michal. He tells us how Michal immediately assumed leadership of the group, speaking boldly before the King and his Catholic accusers:

I understand that these accusations against me are due to our giving the Blood of the Lord to children. We have hope in the Lord, and we will not repudiate this as long as our heart beats in our body, for the truth is with us.<sup>35</sup>

Here Michal testifies both to the truth of the fundamental Utraquist practice, which was under royal attack, of giving the chalice to the laity, as well as to the even more contentious practice of providing communion to the very young. His brave testimony is, however, just the beginning of his ordeal.

Michal and his three companions were immediately sent off to Karlštejn Castle outside of Prague, where they were thrown in the dungeons to rot. The dungeon transformed Michal. Here he had the opportunity to play the role of the self-mortifying, emotional late medieval saint — but unlike his counterparts elsewhere in Europe, the stimulus for Michal's condition did not lie in the abstract wish for a mystical union with God, but in the very real suffering brought on him by persecution. Michal requested a Bible from the guards, and the four priests, in a Bible-reading marathon, finished the entire Old Testament in their first four weeks in captivity. Michal rarely slept and ate so little that the others did not know how his body could endure. He prayed constantly, sighing, lifting his eyes to heaven, beating his breast, and crying frequently. Crying 'tears of devotion' is a ubiquitous feature of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century hagiography. Frequent tears were a sign of the saint's religious fervour. They expressed both the saint's anguished compassion for the suffering Christ, as well as intense joy in partaking in Christ's love and compassion.<sup>36</sup>

Where other saints sought out the sick and the infirm to drink their pus or care for them in their filth, Michal was 'blessed' with putrid accommodations, which he could not leave. The prison was both dark and foul, without fresh air. Michal revelled in this atmosphere. His biographer tells us how,

Once his soul rejoiced and he lifted his eyes to heaven, and he fell face first to the earth and with his mouth he kissed the ground, and he spread his arms through the human

<sup>34</sup> Text K, fols 223<sup>r</sup>–229<sup>v</sup>, has been dated to 1518 (see n. 16). Text M (National Library Prague, MS XIX A 50), fol. 367<sup>v</sup>, is a seventeenth-century manuscript. Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, has printed a reliable version of Text K on pp. 415–20.

<sup>35</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 416.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 180–82.

excrement like on the cross and with tears he thanked God for this purification. When we wondered about this he said to us, 'Don't think, my sons, that I have lost all reason. I do this that you might know how gladly I bear these things, for I know that through it I will come to eternal joy'. Later Michal, to increase his suffering further, bound chains around his throat and fettered his legs, and he struck his head on a part of the ground strewn with sawdust until his companions grew frightened.<sup>37</sup>

Not surprisingly, after such self-inflicted suffering and abnegation in these fetid conditions, Michal eventually grew sick and died in prison, ensuring his martyrdom. To seal the case for sainthood, the narrator adds that Michal was pure from his earliest childhood, that his body was never blemished by sin, and what's more, that 'throughout his whole life he never took communion in one kind alone'.<sup>38</sup> In other words, Michal, although born and raised in Catholic Poland, was a natural born Utraquist. The author leaves no room for ambiguity: 'He was a man of God, certainly a great saint, honourable priest Michal Polák, and our exemplary father. I end here the Life of the holy priest Michal, whose soul was accepted into God's kingdom and heavenly joy.'<sup>39</sup>

Michal was a bridging figure. He possessed the 'unquiet soul' so familiar from the lives of the late medieval saints. But Michal is perhaps different from these saints in that they created horrible discomfort out of the relatively benign circumstances of their homes and monasteries, while Michal on the other hand was thrust into asceticism by circumstance, specifically by the persecution of the Catholic king. Thus Michal's saintly acts tie in both with the heroic renunciation and mortification of the fourteenth-century saints and the great martyrs of the early Christian period, martyrs to whom the Utraquists and later Protestant reformers were so drawn. Furthermore, Michal exhibited the specific characteristics of the Utraquist saint: he was a parish priest, a preacher and leader of the lay community; he openly testified and bravely held to his Utraquist beliefs, and for this he died a martyr's death. Michal was a critical figure, in life and in death, for the Utraquists' struggle for survival in the 1480s. He entered the Utraquist liturgical calendar on 6 July as a saint alongside Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, pp. 418–19.

<sup>38</sup> How Michal might have had access to the chalice as a youth in Poland is not explained by the annalists. Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 417.

<sup>39</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 420.

<sup>40</sup> Bartoš, 'Dvě studie', p. 79 n. 34, lists four liturgical texts that make reference to Michal. The first is a Kyrie found in the Lounský kancionál. The other three texts, including an Alleluia and a Prose, were edited by Václav Novotný in *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, 8 vols (Prague: Palacký 1873–1932), VIII, 460–61, 467. According to Bartoš, the liturgical texts are found in sixteenth-

## *The Case of Jan Bechyňka*

The apotheosis of Michal Polák can be read as an Utraquist act of resistance to the King's policy of re-Catholicizing Bohemia, a resistance that culminated with the Prague Insurrection of 1483. During the Insurrection, the Calixtine burghers retook control of the city after a period of domination by Catholic lords appointed by Vladislav. This uprising was one indication that the forced suppression of the Utraquist Church was futile, and in 1485 an historic pact of toleration was enacted with the Peace of Kutná Hora, which gave the Utraquist and Roman Catholic Church equal standing in Bohemia and Moravia.

The popular Utraquist preacher and parish priest, Jan Bechyňka, died in 1507, twenty-two years after the Kutná Hora settlement. This settlement created a new difficulty for Bechyňka's prospective hagiographer. There had been no Utraquist martyrs since Michal Polák's death in 1480, yet the Utraquist Church continued to need heroes to bolster its membership, which continually felt pressured from both the traditionalists who wanted to make their peace with Rome, and supporters of the Unity of Brethren who felt that Utraquism had betrayed its early promise.

About Jan Bechyňka we know very little. He was apparently one of those priests who was forced to travel far afield for his ordination. It was said that he travelled with a group of priests to be ordained by the Armenian bishop, who probably resided in Lvov at the time.<sup>41</sup> We know little else about Bechyňka except the few clues he drops in his surviving allegorical Czech sermons. He was something of a Czech patriot, a staunch Utraquist who railed against both Catholics and the upstart Unity of Brethren.

Bechyňka's biographer struggled within the structural confines of Utraquist hagiography to create a suitable portrait.<sup>42</sup> His strategy is to declare right off Bechyňka's saintliness, and to enumerate his saintly qualities:

century manuscripts but they almost certainly reflect exemplars that were composed much closer to the date of Michal's death.

<sup>41</sup> This event is described in a work by Master Matouš Kolín z Chotěřiny, printed by Václav Chaloupecký, 'Pře kněžská z r. 1562', in *Věstník královské české společnosti nauk* (Prague, 1925), p. 136. On this and other details of Bechyňka's life and work, see Noemi Rejchrtová, 'Jan Bechyňka — kněz a literát' (Jan Bechyňka — priest and man of letters), in *Praga mystica: z dějin české reformace*, *Acta reformationem Bohemicam illustrantia*, 3 (Prague: Kalich, 1984), pp. 5–34.

<sup>42</sup> Unlike the biographers of Jan Želivský and Michal Polák, Bechyňka's biographer does not identify himself or explain his relationship to his subject. The form of this vita is, like the others, a 'relation', inserted only into a limited number of the chronicle manuscripts. Like Michal's vita, it appears only in Text K, fols 283<sup>r</sup>–285<sup>r</sup>, and Text M, and was accurately copied by Palacký, *Staří letopisové čeští*, pp. 425–27.

Reading of the acts of many celebrated men, we commemorate them and we believe that they are holy; therefore we who knew the celebrated man, endowed through the great gifts of God all-powerful, a preacher well-versed in Holy Scriptures and a faithful teacher, a man diligent in fasts and in numerous prayers, living a very strict life, the priest Jan Bechyňka, about whom we do not doubt that *he looks now in the face of God all-powerful together with the other saints, for the consolation of penitent people*, this was the end of his life.<sup>43</sup>

In this opening declaration, our narrator asserts Bechyňka's sainthood, and enumerates his holy qualities: he is a preacher well-versed in Scripture and a teacher who lives a strict, moral life. Moreover, Bechyňka now dwells with God, '*for the consolation of penitent people*'. That is, he is now in a position to *intercede* with God on behalf of the faithful, which, besides being an example to imitate and/or admire, is the saint's primary function. Intercession was the function most hotly disputed by early Hussite theologians. In this vita, the hagiographer seems to take the traditional Roman position on intercession, without belabouring the issue.

The account goes on to describe Bechyňka's final three days on this earth. We hear nothing of the priest's childhood, no miracles, no self-flagellation, and no struggles with demons. Bechyňka's holiness is demonstrated primarily through his actions during his final hours on earth. Three days before his death, he was overtaken by illness, apparently the plague. In spite of his weak condition, we learn that 'he went to church and served the body of the Lord and the blood of the Lord to both adults and children, which gave him special pleasure'.<sup>44</sup> He then, with difficulty, spoke one last time before his congregation. He made an open confession of his sins and then he testified publicly that he was dying in the true faith in Christ, not in the heretical faith of the Unity of Brethren or others. He finished with a fiery sermon on dying.

After finishing his sermon, Bechyňka 'cried sorrowfully' and made the painful trip home unaided. The remainder of the account focuses on the priest's suffering: the tumors under his armpits, the blisters on his breast. Bechyňka called out to God to increase his suffering: 'Give me these pains, bleed dry my sinful blood, of which I accumulated plenty in feasting and in good living'.<sup>45</sup> Bechyňka accepts and welcomes his pain as a rite of purification. Denied the martyrdom of Hus and Michal, Bechyňka views his final illness as a martyrdom of his body, for the sake of his community as well as his own purgation.

<sup>43</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 425 (emphasis mine).

<sup>44</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 425.

<sup>45</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 426.

We see more clearly the communal nature of Bechyňka's suffering the following day, a Friday, when the priest asked to be transferred to larger quarters, apparently expressly so that more witnesses might be able to observe his final passion. In front of an audience, he put on a display of pained piety, crying and praying constantly to God for salvation and for death: 'My God', he exclaimed, 'they ridiculed you, as well as me, your unworthy servant. My God, already I thirst for you like a deer greedy for water.'<sup>46</sup> The ridicule (which appears merely rhetorical — nowhere does the narrator describe Bechyňka being ridiculed) and the thirst echo Christ's treatment on the road to Cavalry and his thirst on the Cross.<sup>47</sup> This allusion is confirmed when Bechyňka asks for one final favour, to die that day, Friday, 'in memory of his innocent passion'. The favour is granted, and with his passing and during the burial there is thunderous lamentation: 'There was such lamentation, that the most wretched person could hardly hold back his crying from grief, and even from the children there was such great crying that it could be clearly heard far away.'<sup>48</sup>

Bechyňka's manner of death was crucial both to him and his hagiographer. He died within full view of the public, like the martyrs of old, mauled by savage beasts in the arena, setting an example through his heroic fortitude. The lamentation that followed served to confirm the priest's saintly status. The whole populace, even the children, was bemoaning the loss of their holy protector, seemingly demanding of God that he be returned to them as a saint.

The basis for Bechyňka's sainthood was nevertheless about as prosaic as it could be: He was a morally upright teacher, a passionate preacher who testified to his Utraquist faith to the bitter end. Besides his work as teacher and preacher, his *imitatio Christi* consisted primarily in dying a horrible, yet natural, death openly and with dignity, on a Friday. The Utraquist's critics on one side, the Roman Catholics, would probably deny that Bechyňka demonstrated sufficient characteristics of sanctity. Critics on the other side, the Unity of Brethren, denied the entire concept of sainthood. It was between these poles that the Utraquist hagiographer had to work, striving to find a heroic model to hold the reforming middle ground.

<sup>46</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 426. Here the priest echoes Psalm 42. 1: 'As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God.' (Thanks to Professor Colish for bringing this to my attention.)

<sup>47</sup> Bechyňka's 'thirst' also brings to mind courtly love poetry and the erotic imagery of the Song of Songs.

<sup>48</sup> Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, pp. 426–27.

### *Conclusion: Exhuming Utraquist Saints and Saints' Days*

These vitae found in the Old Czech Annals are unique examples of Utraquist hagiography in the era before the arrival of the Lutheran Confession in Bohemia. They still exist today only because one or two of the compilers of the Old Czech Annals, a work written by and for the urban laity, chose to preserve them in their manuscripts. Written in a straightforward Czech prose, these hagiographies provided their readers with a new conception of sanctity, centred around absolute devotion to the Eucharist in both kinds for adults and children. For the Utraquist hagiographer, the saint *had* to be a priest, both because priests were so central to Eucharistic devotion and because priests were in short supply. The saintly priest had to exhibit heroic fortitude, patience, learning, preaching, leadership ability, and moral rectitude. He *could* undergo great torment and cry effusively, but his holiness would not be manifested by anything so unseemly as miracles or even visions.

Not that the miraculous was completely excluded from the Utraquist worldview. In 1492, when long-dormant silver mines were reopened in Kutná Hora, the miners found human remains. These mines were the site of one of the most notorious episodes in the history of the Hussite Revolution, and the chronicler had no difficulty accounting for the bones. They were relics of 'faithful Czechs', as the chronicler describes them, tossed dead or alive into the deep shafts by the Catholic royalists who dominated Kutná Hora at the time.<sup>49</sup> The victims, including captured priests, were never forgotten by the Utraquist faithful. They were memorialized in the liturgy as the 'Martyrs of Kutná Hora', and venerated collectively as saints along with Jan Hus and Jerome.<sup>50</sup>

The bones of legendary martyrs were noteworthy finds. But a most remarkable discovery was soon made as mining was resumed in the old shafts:

Here the miners also found during mining a body, but not the whole thing, only the upper part of the torso, and this body gave off a beautiful and sweet scent like myrrh; everyone in Kutná Hora can testify to this. People believe that it is the body of the parish priest Jan Chůdek of Kouřim, whom they beheaded together with other priests and threw into the pit, and this happened in the year of our Lord 1419.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, p. 304.

<sup>50</sup> See *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, VIII, 458, 460, 461, 467, for examples of the martyrs of Kutná Hora in the liturgy. They also appear in sermons (p. 368) and songs (p. 453) dedicated to Jan Hus, Jerome, and other Czech martyr-saints.

<sup>51</sup> *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, p. 304. Interestingly, in the liturgical texts individual martyrs from Kutná Hora are not named. One may then wonder how this particular

The remains of this priest of Kouřim, executed over seventy years previously, clearly exhibited signs of God's favour: the body, miraculously preserved, giving off the sweet scent of expensive perfume. This small miracle is another indication of the continued vitality of ancient traditions associated with saints and their relics among Utraquist authors and their lay readership. This miracle also indicates how closely sainthood was tied to the parish priesthood in Utraquist circles. Dozens of the faithful had met their doom in the mineshafts of Kutná Hora, but somehow it was evident that the sweet smelling torso must belong to a priest.

The discovery of Jan Chůdek's body was also significant in that it created a very real connection between the Utraquist faithful and their heroic forebears. A similar connection, through the celebration of Jan Hus Day, came to play a prominent role in Utraquist life in the early sixteenth century, if the Old Czech Annals are any indication. There is not a single reference in the Old Czech Annals to the celebration of Jan Hus Day throughout the entire fifteenth century. In fact, there are some indications that the Utraquist city fathers were attempting to suppress the frequent celebrations accompanying saints' days. The story of a dispute in 1483 informs us that while Prague churches adhering to the Roman rite held annual fairs (*posvícenie*) on the day of the church's patron saint, Utraquist churches all held their fair on the same day, St Václav's Day, a kind of national holiday.<sup>52</sup> This policy of downplaying saints' days, along with the feasting and partying that they engendered, suited perfectly the stricter interpreters of Utraquist practice.

The first mention of Jan Hus Day in the Old Czech Annals does not come until 1503. At this time, the Utraquist leaders decided to declare the 'vigil of the saint Master Jan Hus' a day of fasting and prayer as a means of imploring God for much-needed rain. This was a significant step, in that it raised Hus's feast day to the level of those for Jesus, Mary, and the apostles, and not too many others. The fast, mandated by both the priests and the civic authorities, was flouted by the Roman Catholics:

torso was identified as the priest Jan Chůdek. One possibility is that the Old Czech Annals were consulted. The entry for Text R from 1419 describes how Chůdek was beheaded and tossed into the pit along with two colleagues; see *Staré letopisy české z vratislavského rukopisu*, p. 21. Chůdek's death is also attested in Vavřinec of Březová's 'Hussite Chronicle'.

<sup>52</sup> This also appears to be an indication that the Utraquists saw themselves as forging a national church, rather than just being a reforming branch of the universal Roman Church; see *Staré letopisy české z rukopisu křižovnického*, p. 290.

But the Roman party didn't want to fast or even to commemorate this day. They went through Prague over to the castle and some went to Malá Strana [on the royalist side of the river] so that they could eat meat and not fast for Saint Master Hus. And so the Lord God did not send rain.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the apparent failure of the fast to achieve its aims, this report indicates that Hus was being revered not only as a pious example for others to emulate, but as a full-fledged saint, one capable of acting as a patron and intercessor before God.

In this first mention of a major observance of St Jan Hus, the commemoration takes a form that most Utraquists could agree on — a day of fasting and prayer. The second mention of Jan Hus Day takes on a much different form. As was quoted at length at the opening of this article, the celebrations of 5–6 June 1517 were marked by great throngs, bonfires, blaring trumpets, and booming guns. Jan Hus has been transformed from patron, invoked for help through prayer and fasts, to a symbol of Utraquist triumph and unity, to be celebrated with all fanfare.

Soon thereafter, in 1521, the celebrations for Jan Hus day were used to rally the faithful and to threaten anyone trying to overturn the status quo. In this year, the Utraquists gathered at the monastery of St James, founded by the hated Minorites, now exiled from Prague. From there they marched to the bridge and then down to St Mary of the Snows, Jan Želivský's former church, singing all the while songs about Jan Hus as well as the infamous 'Věrní křesťané silně doufejme' (O faithful Christians, let us hope mightily) the song that instigated the royal crackdown of Utraquists in 1483. This was the second time in two years that the Utraquists engaged in such celebrations on Hus's day. The destinations of the marchers and the songs they sang were purposely provocative. Commencing the march at the former Minorite monastery, where the mendicants had twice been banished from the city, symbolized the Utraquist triumph over their main adversaries, as did the public singing of songs that had once been banned by royal proclamation. Ending the march at St Mary of the Snows, where Želivský had fomented revolutionary violence, was no subtle threat to those who sought a new Catholic restoration. The Utraquist public knew this history well, as did the city fathers. The chronicler tells us that there was such fear in the city of popular violence that all the gates of Prague, the stone bridge, and Malá Strana were locked up for the day.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Prague, National Museum, MS V E 89 (Text O), fol. 253<sup>v</sup>. See also Text L, fol. 138<sup>r</sup>, Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 224.

<sup>54</sup> Text L, fol. 284<sup>r</sup>. See also Palacký, *Starší letopisové čeští*, p. 373.

Like the concept of the saint, the saint's day had come full circle in Utraquist practice. Hussite radicals had once rejected all saints not found in the New Testament. They treated saints as moral exemplars only and rejected saints' days for any purpose other than reflection and prayer. But the Utraquists of early sixteenth-century Prague celebrated Jan Hus Day with all the hoopla of a national holiday and used it as a reminder of the forces that could be unleashed by invoking Hus's name. It is perhaps not surprising that Jan Hus Day came to accrue such latent energy. After all, over the years more and more martyrs, whose memories could inflame great passion, were added to this day: the fiery Czech zealot Jerome of Prague; the pitiable martyrs of Kutná Hora, whose recently found relics brought their tragedy freshly to light; the courageous Pole Michal. Through this day, now a great feast, and under the guidance of new saints representing the virtues of the reforming church, the Utraquist faithful were able to look forward a future filled with the greatest of promise.



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